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THE

WORKS

OF

Samuel Johnſon, LL.D.

A NEW EDITION,

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

WITH

AN ESSAY ON HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

VOLUME THE ELEVENTH.

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SWIFT.

AN account of Dr. Swift has been already collected, with great diligence and acuteneſs, by Dr. Hawkeſworth, according to a ſcheme which I laid before him in the intimacy of our friendſhip. I cannot therefore be expected to ſay much of a life, concerning which I had long ſince communicated my thoughts to a man capable of dignifying his narrations with ſo much elegance of language and force of ſentiment.

JONATHAN SWIFT was, according to an account ſaid to be * written by himſelf, the ſon of Jonathan Swift, an attorney, and was born at Dublin on St. Andrew's day, 1667: according to his own report, as delivered by Pope to Spence, he was born at Leiceſter, the ſon of a clergyman, who was miniſter of a pariſh in Herefordſhire †. During his life the place of his birth was undetermined. He was

* Mr. Sheridan in his Life of Swift obſerves, that this account was really written by the Dean, and now exiſts in his own handwriting in the library of Dublin College. R.

† Spence's Anecdotes, vol. II. p. 273.

contented to be called an Irishman by the Irish; but would occasionally call himself an Englishman. The question may, without much regret, be left in the obscurity in which he delighted to involve it.

Whatever was his birth, his education was Irish. He was sent at the age of six to the school at Kilkenny, and in his fifteenth year (1682) was admitted into the University of Dublin.

In his academical studies he was either not diligent or not happy. It must disappoint every reader's expectation, that, when at the usual time he claimed the Bachelorship of Arts, he was found by the examiners too conspicuously deficient for regular admission, and obtained his degree at last by *special favour*; a term used in that university to denote want of merit.

Of this disgrace it may be easily supposed that he was much ashamed, and shame had its proper effect in producing reformation. He resolved from that time to study eight hours a-day, and continued his industry for seven years, with what improvement is sufficiently known. This part of the story well deserves to be remembered; it may afford useful admonition and powerful encouragement to men, whose abilities have been made for a time useless by their passions or pleasures, and who, having lost one part of life in idleness, are tempted to throw away the remainder in despair.

In this course of daily application he continued three years longer at Dublin; and in this time, if the observation of an old companion may be trusted, he drew the first sketch of his "Tale of a Tub."

When he was about one-and-twenty (1688), being by the death of Godwin Swift his uncle, who had sup-

ſupported him, left without ſubſiſtence, he went to conſult his mother, who then lived at Leiceſter, about the future courſe of his life; and by her direction ſolicited the advice and patronage of Sir William Temple, who had married one of Mrs. Swift's relations, and whoſe father Sir John Temple, Maſter of the Rolls in Ireland, had lived in great familiarity of friendſhip with Godwin Swift, by whom Jonathan had been to that time maintained.

Temple received with ſufficient kindneſs the nephew of his father's friend, with whom he was, when they converſed together, ſo much pleaſed, that he detained him two years in his houſe. Here he became known to King William, who ſometimes viſited Temple when he was diſabled by the gout, and, being attended by Swift in the garden, ſhewed him how to cut aſparagus in the Dutch way.

King William's notions were all military; and he expreſſed his kindneſs to Swift by offering to make him a captain of horſe.

When Temple removed to Moor park, he took Swift with him; and when he was conſulted by the Earl of Portland about the expedience of complying with a bill then depending for making parliaments triennial, againſt which King Willian was ſtrongly prejudiced, after having in vain tried to ſhew the Earl that the propoſal involved nothing dangerous to royal power, he ſent Swift for the ſame purpoſe to the King. Swift, who probably was proud of his employment, and went with all the confidence of a young man, found his arguments, and his art of diſplaying them, made totally ineffectual by the pre-

determination of the King; and ufed to mention this difappointment as his firft antidote againft vanity.

Before he left Ireland he contracted a diforder, as he thought, by eating too much fruit. The original of difeafes is commonly obfcure. Almoft every body eats as much fruit as he can get, without any great inconvenience. The difeafe of Swift was giddinefs with deafnefs, which attacked him from time to time, began very early, purfued him through life, and at laft fent him to the grave, deprived of reafon.

Being much oppreffed at Moor-park by this grievous malady, he was advifed to try his native air, and went to Ireland; but, finding no benefit, returned to Sir William, at whofe houfe he continued his ftudies, and is known to have read, among other books, "Cyprian" and "Irenæus." He thought exercife of great neceffity, and ufed to run half a mile up and down a hill every two hours.

It is eafy to imagine that the mode in which his firft degree was conferred, left him no great fondnefs for the Univerfity of Dublin, and therefore he refolved to become a Mafter of Arts at Oxford. In the teftimonial which he produced, the words of difgrace were omitted; and he took his Mafter's degree (July 5, 1692) with fuch reception and regard as fully contented him.

While he lived with Temple, he ufed to pay his mother at Leicefter a yearly vifit. He travelled on foot, unlefs fome violence of weather drove him into a waggon; and at night he would go to a penny lodging, where he purchafed clean fheets for fixpence. This practice Lord Orrery imputes to his innate love of groffnefs and vulgarity: fome may afcribe it to his

his desire of surveying human life through all its varieties; and others, perhaps with equal probability, to a passion which seems to have been deeply fixed in his heart, the love of a shilling.

In time he began to think that his attendance at Moor-park deserved some other recompence than the pleasure, however mingled with improvement, of Temple's conversation; and grew so impatient, that (1694) he went away in discontent.

Temple, conscious of having given reason for complaint, is said to have made him Deputy Master of the Rolls in Ireland; which, according to his kinsman's account, was an office which he knew him not able to discharge. Swift therefore resolved to enter into the Church, in which he had at first no higher hopes than of the chaplainship to the Factory at Lisbon; but being recommended to Lord Capel, he obtained the prebend of *Kilroot* in *Connor*, of about a hundred pounds a year.

But the infirmities of Temple made a companion like Swift so necessary, that he invited him back, with a promise to procure him English preferment in exchange for the prebend, which he desired him to resign. With this request Swift complied, having perhaps equally repented their separation, and they lived on together with mutual satisfaction; and, in the four years that passed between his return and Temple's death, it is probable that he wrote the "Tale of a Tub" and the "Battle of the Books."

Swift began early to think, or to hope, that he was a poet, and wrote Pindarick Odes to Temple, to the King, and to the Athenian Society, a knot of

obſcure men *, who publiſhed a periodical pamphlet of anſwers to queſtions, ſent, or ſuppoſed to be ſent, by Letters. I have been told that Dryden, having peruſed theſe verſes, ſaid, "Couſin Swift, you will "never be a poet;" and that this denunciation was the motive of Swift's perpetual malevolence to Dryden.

In 1699 Temple died, and left a legacy with his manuſcripts to Swift, for whom he had obtained, from King William, a promiſe of the firſt prebend that ſhould be vacant at Weſtminſter or Canterbury.

That this promiſe might not be forgotten, Swift dedicated to the King the poſthumous works with which he was intruſted: but neither the dedication, nor tenderneſs for the man whom he once had treated with confidence and fondneſs, revived in King William the remembrance of his promiſe. Swift awhile attended the Court; but ſoon found his ſolicitations hopeleſs.

He was then invited by the Earl of Berkeley to accompany him into Ireland, as his private ſecretary; but, after having done the buſineſs till their arrival at Dublin, he then found that one Buſh had perſuaded the Earl that a Clergyman was not a proper ſecretary, and had obtained the office for himſelf. In a man like Swift, ſuch circumvention and inconſtancy muſt have excited violent indignation.

But he had yet more to ſuffer. Lord Berkeley had the diſpoſal of the deanery of Derry, and Swift expected to obtain it; but by the ſecretary's influence, ſuppoſed to have been ſecured by a bribe, it was beſtowed on ſomebody elſe; and Swift was diſmiſſed

* The Publiſher of this Collection was John Dunton. R.

with

with the livings of Laracor and Rathbeggin in the diocefe of Meath, which together did not equal half the value of the deanery.

At Laracor he increafed the parochial duty by reading prayers on Wednefdays and Fridays, and performed all the offices of his profeffion with great decency and exactnefs.

Soon after his fettlement at Laracor, he invited to Ireland the unfortunate Stella, a young woman whofe name was Johnfon, the daughter of the fteward of Sir William Temple, who, in confideration of her father's virtues, left her a thoufand pounds. With her came Mrs. Dingley, whofe whole fortune was twenty-feven pounds a year for her life. With thefe Ladies he paffed his hours of relaxation, and to them he opened his bofom; but they never refided in the fame houfe, nor did he fee either without a witnefs. They lived at the Parfonage, when Swift was away; and, when he returned, removed to a lodging, or to the houfe of a neighbouring clergyman.

Swift was not one of thofe minds which amaze the world with early pregnancy: his firft work, except his few poetical Effays, was the "Diffentions in "Athens and Rome," publifhed (1701) in his thirty-fourth year. After its appearance, paying a vifit to fome bifhop, he heard mention made of the new pamphlet that Burnet had written, replete with political knowledge. When he feemed to doubt Burnet's right to the work, he was told by the Bifhop, that he was "a young man;" and, ftill perfifting to doubt, that he was "a very pofitive young man."

Three years afterwards (1704) was publifhed "The Tale of a Tub:" of this book charity may

be perſuaded to think that it might be written by a man of peculiar character, without ill intention; but it is certainly of dangerous example. That Swift was its author, though it be univerſally believed, was never owned by himſelf, nor very well proved by any evidence; but no other claimant can be produced, and he did not deny it when Archbiſhop Sharpe and the Ducheſs of Somerſet, by ſhewing it to the Queen, debarred him from a biſhoprick.

When this wild work firſt raiſed the attention of the publick, Sacheverell, meeting Smalridge, tried to flatter him, ſeeming to think him the author; but Smalridge anſwered with indignation, "Not all that "you and I have in the world, nor all that we "ſhall have, ſhould hire me to write the 'Tale of a "Tub'."

The digreſſions relating to Wotton and Bentley muſt be confeſſed to diſcover want of knowledge or want of integrity; he did not underſtand the two controverſies, or he willingly miſrepreſented them. But Wit can ſtand its ground againſt Truth only a little while. The honours due to Learning have been juſtly diſtributed by the deciſion of poſterity.

"The Battle of the Books" is ſo like the "Combat des Livres," which the ſame queſtion concerning the Ancients and Moderns had produced in France, that the improbability of ſuch a coincidence of thoughts without communication is not, in my opinion, balanced by the anonymous proteſtation prefixed, in which all knowledge of the French book is peremptorily diſowned *.

* See Sheridan's Life, p. 451, where are ſome remarks on this paſſage. R.

For

For ſome time after Swift was probably employed in ſolitary ſtudy, gaining the qualifications requiſite for future eminence. How often he viſited England, and with what diligence he attended his pariſhes, I know not. It was not till about four years afterwards that he became a profeſſed author; and then one year (1708) produced "The Sentiments of a "Church-of-England Man;" the ridicule of Aſtrology under the name of "Bickerſtaff;" the "Argu-"ment againſt aboliſhing Chriſtianity;" and the defence of the "Sacramental Teſt."

"The Sentiments of a Church-of-England Man" is written with great coolneſs, moderation, eaſe, and perſpicuity. The "Argument againſt aboliſhing "Chriſtianity" is a very happy and judicious irony. One paſſage in it deſerves to be ſelected.

"If Chriſtianity were once aboliſhed, how could "the free-thinkers, the ſtrong reaſoners, and the "men of profound learning, be able to find another "ſubject ſo calculated, in all points, whereon to "diſplay their abilities? What wonderful produc-"tions of wit ſhould we be deprived of from thoſe, "whoſe genius, by continual practice, hath been "wholly turned upon raillery and invectives againſt "religion, and would therefore never be able to "ſhine, or diſtinguiſh themſelves, upon any other "ſubject? We are daily complaining of the great "decline of wit among us, and would take away "the greateſt, perhaps the only, topick we have "left. Who would ever have ſuſpected Aſgill for "a wit, or Toland for a philoſopher, if the inex-"hauſtible ſtock of Chriſtianity had not been at "hand to provide them with materials? What

"other

"other subject, through all art or nature, could "have produced Tindal for a profound author, or "furnished him with readers? It is the wise choice "of the subject that alone adorns and distinguishes "the writer. For had an hundred such pens as "these been employed on the side of religion, they "would have immediately sunk into silence and "oblivion."

The reasonableness of a *Test* is not hard to be proved; but perhaps it must be allowed that the proper test has not been chosen.

The attention paid to the papers, published under the name of "Bickerstaff," induced Steele, when he projected the "Tatler," to assume an appellation which had already gained possession of the reader's notice.

In the year following he wrote a "Project for the "Advancement of Religion," addressed to Lady Berkeley; by whose kindness it is not unlikely that he was advanced to his benefices. To this project, which is formed with great purity of intention, and displayed with sprightliness and elegance, it can only be objected, that, like many projects, it is, if not generally impracticable, yet evidently hopeless, as it supposes more zeal, concord, and perseverance, than a view of mankind gives reason for expecting.

He wrote likewise this year a "Vindication of "Bickerstaff;" and an explanation of an "Ancient "Prophecy," part written after the facts, and the rest never completed, but well planned to excite amazement.

Soon after began the busy and important part of Swift's life. He was employed (1710) by the primate

mate of Ireland to ſolicit the Queen for a remiſſion of the Firſt Fruits and Twentieth Parts to the Iriſh Clergy. With this purpoſe he had recourſe to Mr. Harley, to whom he was mentioned as a man neglected and oppreſſed by the laſt miniſtry, becauſe he had refuſed to co-operate with ſome of their ſchemes. What he had refuſed has never been told; what he had ſuffered was, I ſuppoſe, the excluſion from a biſhoprick by the remonſtrances of Sharpe, whom he deſcribes as "the harmleſs tool of others' hate," and whom he repreſents as afterwards "ſuing for pardon."

Harley's deſigns and ſituation were ſuch as made him glad of an auxiliary ſo well qualified for his ſervice; he therefore ſoon admitted him to familiarity, whether ever to confidence ſome have made a doubt; but it would have been difficult to excite his zeal without perſuading him that he was truſted, and not very eaſy to delude him by falſe perſuaſions.

He was certainly admitted to thoſe meetings in which the firſt hints and original plan of action are ſuppoſed to have been formed; and was one of the ſixteen Miniſters, or agents of the Miniſtry, who met weekly at each other's houſes, and were united by the name of "Brother."

Being not immediately conſidered as an obdurate Tory, he converſed indiſcriminately with all the wits, and was yet the friend of Steele; who, in the "Tatler," which began in April, 1709, confeſſes the advantage of his converſation, and mentions ſomething contributed by him to his paper. But he was now immerging into political controverſy; for the year 1710 produced the "Examiner," of which

Swift wrote thirty-three papers. In argument he may be allowed to have the advantage; for where a wide syſtem of conduct, and the whole of a public character, is laid open to enquiry, the accuſer having the choice of facts, muſt be very unſkilful if he does not prevail; but, with regard to wit, I am afraid none of Swift's papers will be found equal to thoſe by which Addiſon oppoſed him *.

He wrote in the year 1711 a "Letter to the October Club," a number of Tory Gentlemen ſent from the country to Parliament, who formed themſelves into a club, to the number of about a hundred, and met to animate the zeal and raiſe the expectations of each other. They thought, with great reaſon, that the Miniſters were loſing opportunities; that ſufficient uſe was not made of the ardour of the nation; they called loudly for more changes, and ſtronger efforts; and demanded the puniſhment of part, and the diſmiſſion of the reſt, of thoſe whom they conſidered as public robbers.

Their eagerneſs was not gratified by the Queen, or by Harley. The Queen was probably ſlow becauſe ſhe was afraid; and Harley was ſlow becauſe he was doubtful: he was a Tory only by neceſſity, or for convenience; and, when he had power in his hands, had no ſettled purpoſe for which he ſhould employ it; forced to gratify to a certain degree the Tories who ſupported him, but unwilling to make his reconcilement to the Whigs utterly deſperate, he correſponded at once with the two expectants of the

* Mr. Sheridan however ſays, that Addiſon's laſt Whig Examiner was publiſhed Oct. 12, 1711; and Swift's firſt Examiner, on the 10th of the following November. R.

Crown,

Crown, and kept, as has been obſerved, the ſucceſſion undetermined. Not knowing what to do, he did nothing; and, with the fate of a double dealer, at laſt he loſt his power, but kept his enemies.

Swift ſeems to have concurred in opinion with the "October Club;" but it was not in his power to quicken the tardineſs of Harley, whom he ſtimulated as much as he could, but with little effect. He that knows not whither to go, is in no haſte to move. Harley, who was perhaps not quick by nature, became yet more ſlow by irreſolution; and was content to hear that dilatorineſs lamented as natural, which he applauded in himſelf as politick.

Without the Tories, however, nothing could be done; and, as they were not to be gratified, they muſt be appeaſed; and the conduct of the Miniſter, if it could not be vindicated, was to be plauſibly excuſed.

Early in the next year he publiſhed a "Propoſal "for correcting, improving, and aſcertaining the "Engliſh Tongue," in a Letter to the Earl of Oxford; written without much knowledge of the general nature of language, and without any accurate enquiry into the hiſtory of other tongues. The certainty and ſtability which, contrary to all experience, he thinks attainable, he propoſes to ſecure by inſtituting an academy; the decrees of which every man would have been willing, and many would have been proud, to diſobey, and which, being renewed by ſucceſſive elections, would in a ſhort time have differed from itſelf.

Swift now attained the zenith of his political importance: he publiſhed (1712) the "Conduct of "the

"the Allies," ten days before the Parliament aſſembled. The purpoſe was to perſuade the nation to a peace; and never had any writer more ſucceſs. The people, who had been amuſed with bonfires and triumphal proceſſions, and looked with idolatry on the General and his friends, and who, as they thought, had made England the arbitreſs of nations, were confounded between ſhame and rage, when they found that "mines had been exhauſted, and millions deſtroyed," to ſecure the Dutch or aggrandize the Emperor, without any advantage to ourſelves; that we had been bribing our neighbours to fight their own quarrel; and that amongſt our enemies we might number our allies.

That is now no longer doubted, of which the nation was then firſt informed, that the war was unneceſſarily protracted to fill the pockets of Marlborough; and that it would have been continued without end, if he could have continued his annual plunder. But Swift, I ſuppoſe, did not yet know what he has ſince written, that a commiſſion was drawn which would have appointed him General for life, had it not become ineffectual by the reſolution of Lord Cowper, who refuſed the ſeal.

"Whatever is received," ſay the ſchools, "is "received in proportion to the recipient." The power of a political treatiſe depends much upon the diſpoſition of the people; the nation was then combuſtible, and a ſpark ſet it on fire. It is boaſted, that between November and January eleven thouſand were ſold; a great number at that time, when we were not yet a nation of readers. To its propagation certainly no agency of power or influence was

wanting. It furniſhed arguments for converſation, ſpeeches for debate, and materials for parliamentary reſolutions.

Yet, ſurely, whoever ſurveys this wonder-working pamphlet with cool peruſal, will confeſs that its efficacy was ſupplied by the paſſions of its readers; that it operates by the mere weight of facts, with very little aſſiſtance from the hand that produced them.

This year (1712) he publiſhed his "Reflections "on the Barrier Treaty," which carries on the deſign of his "Conduct of the Allies," and ſhews how little regard in that negotiation had been ſhewn to the intereſt of England, and how much of the conquered country had been demanded by the Dutch.

This was followed by "Remarks on the Biſhop of "Sarum's Introduction to his third Volume of the "Hiſtory of the Reformation;" a pamphlet which Burnet publiſhed as an alarm, to warn the nation of the approach of Popery. Swift, who ſeems to have diſliked the Biſhop with ſomething more than political averſion, treats him like one whom he is glad of an opportunity to inſult.

Swift, being now the declared favourite and ſuppoſed confident of the Tory Miniſtry, was treated by all that depended on the Court with the reſpect which dependents know how to pay. He ſoon began to feel part of the miſery of greatneſs; he that could ſay that he knew him, conſidered himſelf as having fortune in his power. Commiſſions, ſolicitations, remonſtrances, crowded about him; he was expected to do every man's buſineſs, to procure employment for one, and to retain it for another. In aſſiſting

thoſe

those who addressed him, he represents himself as sufficiently diligent; and desires to have others believe, what he probably believed himself, that by his interposition many Whigs of merit, and among them Addison and Congreve, were continued in their places. But every man of known influence has so many petitions which he cannot grant, that he must necessarily offend more than he gratifies, because the preference given to one affords all the rest reason for complaint. "When I give away a place," said Lewis XIV. "I make an hundred discontented, and "one ungrateful."

Much has been said of the equality and independence which he preserved in his conversation with the Ministers, of the frankness of his remonstrances, and the familiarity of his friendship. In accounts of this kind a few single incidents are set against the general tenor of behaviour. No man, however, can pay a more servile tribute to the Great, than by suffering his liberty in their presence to aggrandize him in his own esteem. Between different ranks of the community there is necessarily some distance: he who is called by his superior to pass the interval, may properly accept the invitation; but petulance and obtrusion are rarely produced by magnanimity; nor have often any nobler cause than the pride of importance, and the malice of inferiority. He who knows himself necessary may set, while that necessity lasts, a high value upon himself; as, in a lower condition, a servant eminently skilful may be saucy; but he is saucy only because he is servile. Swift appears to have preserved the kindness of the Great when they wanted him no longer; and therefore it

muſt be allowed, that the childiſh freedom, to which he ſeems enough inclined, was overpowered by his better qualities.

His diſintereſtedneſs had been likewiſe mentioned; a ſtrain of heroiſm, which would have been in his condition romantick and ſuperfluous. Eccleſiaſtical benefices, when they become vacant, muſt be given away; and the friends of power may, if there be no inherent diſqualification, reaſonably expect them. Swift accepted (1713) the deanery of St. Patrick, the beſt preferment that his friends could venture to give him. That Miniſtry was in a great degree ſupported by the Clergy, who were not yet reconciled to the author of the "Tale of a Tub," and would not without much diſcontent and indignation have born to ſee him inſtalled in an Engliſh Cathedral.

He refuſed, indeed, fifty pounds from Lord Oxford; but he accepted afterwards a draught of a thouſand upon the Exchequer, which was intercepted by the Queen's death, and which he reſigned, as he ſays himſelf, "*multa gemens*, with many a groan."

In the midſt of his power and his politicks, he kept a journal of his viſits, his walks, his interviews with Miniſters, and quarrels with his ſervant, and tranſmitted it to Mrs. Johnſon and Mrs. Dingley, to whom he knew that whatever befel him was intereſting, and no accounts could be too minute. Whether theſe diurnal trifles were properly expoſed to eyes which had never received any pleaſure from the preſence of the Dean, may be reaſonably doubted: they have, however, ſome odd attraction; the reader, finding frequent mention of names which he has been uſed

to confider as important, goes on in hope of information; and, as there is nothing to fatigue attention, if he is difappointed he can hardly complain. It is eafy to perceive, from every page, that though ambition preffed Swift into a life of buftle, the wifh for a life of eafe was always returning.

He went to take poffeffion of his deanery as foon as he had obtained it; but he was not fuffered to ftay in Ireland more than a fortnight before he was recalled to England, that he might reconcile Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke, who began to look on one another with malevolence, which every day increafed, and which Bolingbroke appeared to retain in his laft years.

Swift contrived an interview, from which they both departed difcontented; he procured a fecond, which only convinced him that the feud was irreconcileable: he told them his opinion, that all was loft. This denunciation was contradicted by Oxford; but Bolingbroke whifpered that he was right.

Before this violent diffenfion had fhattered the Miniftry, Swift had publifhed, in the beginning of the year (1714), "The publick Spirit of the Whigs," in anfwer to "The Crifis," a pamphlet for which Steele was expelled from the Houfe of Commons. Swift was now fo far alienated from Steele, as to think him no longer entitled to decency, and therefore treats him fometimes with contempt, and fometimes with abhorrence.

In this pamphlet the Scotch were mentioned in terms fo provoking to that irritable nation, that, refolving "not to be offended with impunity," the Scotch Lords in a body demanded an audience of

the Queen, and ſolicited reparation. A proclamation was iſſued, in which three hundred pounds were offered for the diſcovery of the author. From this ſtorm he was, as he relates, "ſecured by a ſleight;" of what kind, or by whoſe prudence, is not known; and ſuch was the increaſe of his reputation, that the Scottiſh "Nation applied again that he would be "their friend."

He was become ſo formidable to the Whigs, that his familiarity with the Miniſters was clamoured at in Parliament, particularly by two men, afterwards of great note, Aiſlabie and Walpole.

But, by the diſunion of his great friends, his importance and deſigns were now at an end; and ſeeing his ſervices at laſt uſeleſs, he retired about June (1714) into Berkſhire, where, in the houſe of a friend, he wrote what was then ſuppreſſed, but has ſince appeared under the title of "Free thoughts on the preſent State of Affairs."

While he was waiting in his retirement for events which time or chance might bring to paſs, the death of the Queen broke down at once the whole ſyſtem of Tory Politicks; and nothing remained but to withdraw from the implacability of triumphant Whiggiſm, and ſhelter himſelf in unenvied obſcurity.

The accounts of his reception in Ireland, given by Lord Orrery and Dr. Delany, are ſo different, that the credit of the writers, both undoubtedly veracious, cannot be ſaved, but by ſuppoſing, what I think is true, that they ſpeak of different times. When Delany ſays, that he was received with reſpect, he means for the firſt fortnight, when he came to take legal poſſeſſion; and when Lord Orrery tells that he was

pelted by the populace, he is to be underſtood of the time when, after the Queen's death, he became a ſettled reſident.

The Archbiſhop of Dublin gave him at firſt ſome diſturbance in the exerciſe of his juriſdiction; but it was ſoon diſcovered, that between prudence and integrity he was ſeldom in the wrong; and that, when he was right, his ſpirit did not eaſily yield to oppoſition.

Having ſo lately quitted the tumults of a party, and the intrigues of a court, they ſtill kept his thoughts in agitation, as the ſea fluctuates a while when the ſtorm has ceaſed. He therefore filled his hours with ſome hiſtorical attempts, relating to the "Change of the Miniſters," and "the Conduct of "the Miniſtry." He likewiſe is ſaid to have written a "Hiſtory of the Four laſt Years of Queen Anne," which he began in her life-time, and afterwards laboured with great attention, but never publiſhed. It was after his death in the hands of Lord Orrery and Dr. King. A book under that title was publiſhed, with Swift's name, by Dr. Lucas; of which I can only ſay, that it ſeemed by no means to correſpond with the notions that I had formed of it, from a converſation which I once heard between the Earl of Orrery and old Mr. Lewis.

Swift now, much againſt his will, commenced Iriſhman for life, and was to contrive how he might be beſt accommodated in a country where he conſidered himſelf as in a ſtate of exile. It ſeems that his firſt recourſe was to piety. The thoughts of death ruſhed upon him, at this time, with ſuch inceſſant importu-

nity, that they took poſſeſſion of his mind, when he firſt waked, for many years together.

He opened his houſe by a publick table two days a week, and found his entertainments gradually frequented by more and more viſitants of learning among the men, and of elegance among the women. Mrs. Johnſon had left the country, and lived in lodgings not far from the deanery. On his publick days ſhe regulated the table, but appeared at it as a mere gueſt, like other ladies.

On other days he often dined, at a ſtated price, with Mr. Worral, a clergyman of his cathedral, whoſe houſe was recommended by the peculiar neatneſs and pleaſantry of his wife. To this frugal mode of living, he was firſt diſpoſed by care to pay ſome debts which he had contracted, and he continued it for the pleaſure of accumulating money. His avarice, however, was not ſuffered to obſtruct the claims of his dignity; he was ſerved in plate, and uſed to ſay that he was the pooreſt gentleman in Ireland that ate upon plate, and the richeſt that lived without a coach.

How he ſpent the reſt of his time, and how he employed his hours of ſtudy, has been enquired with hopeleſs curioſity. For who can give an account of another's ſtudies? Swift was not likely to admit any to his privacies, or to impart a minute account of his buſineſs or his leiſure.

Soon after (1716) in his forty-ninth year, he was privately married to Mrs. Johnſon, by Dr. Aſhe, Biſhop of Clogher, as Dr. Madden told me, in the garden. The marriage made no change in their mode of life; they lived in different houſes, as be-

fore; nor did ſhe ever lodge in the deanery but when Swift was ſeized with a fit of giddineſs. "It would "be difficult," ſays Lord Orrery, "to prove that "they were ever afterwards together without a third "perſon."

The Dean of St. Patrick's lived in a private manner, known and regarded only by his friends; till, about the year 1720, he, by a pamphlet, recommended to the Iriſh the uſe, and conſequently the improvement, of their manufacture. For a man to uſe the productions of his own labour is ſurely a natural right, and to like beſt what he makes himſelf is a natural paſſion. But to excite this paſſion, and enforce this right, appeared ſo criminal to thoſe who had an intereſt in the Engliſh trade, that the printer was impriſoned; and, as Hawkeſworth juſtly obſerves, the attention of the publick being by this outrageous reſentment turned upon the propoſal, the author was by conſequence made popular.

In 1723 died Mrs. Van Homrigh, a woman made unhappy by her admiration of wit, and ignominiouſly diſtinguiſhed by the name of Vaneſſa, whoſe conduct has been already ſufficiently diſcuſſed, and whoſe hiſtory is too well known to be minutely repeated. She was a young woman fond of literature, whom Decanus, the Dean, called *Cadenus* by tranſpoſition of the letters, took pleaſure in directing and inſtructing; till, from being proud of his praiſe, ſhe grew fond of his perſon. Swift was then about forty-ſeven, at an age when vanity is ſtrongly excited by the amorous attention of a young woman. If it be ſaid that Swift ſhould have checked a paſſion which he never meant to gratify, recourſe muſt be had to

that extenuation which he ſo much deſpiſed, "men "are but men:" perhaps, however, he did not at firſt know his own mind, and, as he repreſents himſelf, was undetermined. For his admiſſion of her courtſhip, and his indulgence of her hopes after his marriage to Stella, no other honeſt plea can be found than that he delayed a diſagreeable diſcovery from time to time, dreading the immediate burſts of diſtreſs, and watching for a favourable moment. She thought herſelf neglected, and died of diſappointment; having ordered by her will the poem to be publiſhed, in which Cadenus had proclaimed her excellence, and confeſſed his love. The effect of the publication upon the Dean and Stella is thus related by Delany:

"I have good reaſon to believe that they both "were greatly ſhocked and diſtreſſed (though it may "be differently) upon this occaſion. The Dean "made a tour to the South of Ireland, for about two "months, at this time, to diſſipate his thoughts, "and give place to obloquy. And Stella retired "(upon the earneſt invitation of the owner) to the "houſe of a cheerful, generous, good-natured friend "of the Dean's, whom ſhe alſo much loved and "honoured. There my informer often ſaw her; and, "I have reaſon to believe, uſed his utmoſt endeavours "to relieve, ſupport, and amuſe her, in this ſad "ſituation.

"One little incident he told me of on that occaſion "I think I ſhall never forget. As his friend was an "hoſpitable, open-hearted man, well-beloved, and "largely acquainted, it happened one day that ſome "gentlemen dropt in to dinner, who were ſtrangers

"to Stella's ſituation; and as the poem of *Cadenus* "*and Vaneſſa* was then the general topick of con- "verſation, one of them ſaid, 'Surely that Vaneſſa "muſt be an extraordinary woman, that could in- "ſpire the Dean to write ſo finely upon her.' Mrs. "Johnſon ſmiled, and anſwered, 'that ſhe thought "that point not quite ſo clear; for it was well "known the Dean could write finely upon a broom- "ſtick."

The great acquiſition of eſteem and influence was made by the "Drapier's Letters" in 1724. One Wood, of Wolverhampton, in Staffordſhire, a man enterpriſing and rapacious, had, as is ſaid, by a preſent to the Ducheſs of Munſter, obtained a patent, empowering him to coin one hundred and eighty thouſand of halfpence and farthings for the kingdom of Ireland, in which there was a very inconvenient and embarraſſing ſcarcity of copper coin; ſo that it was impoſſible to run in debt upon the credit of a piece of money; for the cook or keeper of an alehouſe could not refuſe to ſupply a man that had ſilver in his hand, and the buyer would not leave his money without change.

The project was therefore plauſible. The ſcarcity which was already great, Wood took care to make greater, by agents who gathered up the old halfpence; and was about to turn his braſs into gold, by pouring the treaſures of his new mint upon Ireland, when Swift, finding that the metal was debaſed to an enormous degree, wrote Letters, under the name of *M. B. Drapier*, to ſhew the folly of receiving, and the miſchief that muſt enſue by giving, gold

gold and ſilver for coin worth perhaps not a third part of its nominal value.

The nation was alarmed; the new coin was univerſally refuſed; but the governors of Ireland conſidered reſiſtance to the King's patent as highly criminal; and one Whitſhed, the Chief Juſtice, who had tried the printer of the former pamphlet, and ſent out the Jury nine times, till by clamour and menaces they were frighted into a ſpecial verdict, now preſented the *Drapier*, but could not prevail on the Grand Jury to find the bill.

Lord Carteret and the Privy Council publiſhed a proclamation, offering three hundred pounds for diſcovering the author of the Fourth Letter. Swift had concealed himſelf from his printers, and truſted only his butler, who tranſcribed the paper. The man, immediately after the appearance of the proclamation, ſtrolled from the houſe, and ſtaid out all night, and part of the next day. There was reaſon enough to fear that he had betrayed his maſter for the reward; but he came home, and the Dean ordered him to put off his livery, and leave the houſe; "for," ſays he, "I know that my life is in your "power, and I will not bear, out of fear, either "your inſolence or negligence." The man excuſed his fault with great ſubmiſſion, and begged that he might be confined in the houſe while it was in his power to endanger his maſter; but the Dean reſolutely turned him out, without taking farther notice of him, till the term of the information had expired, and then received him again. Soon afterwards he ordered him and the reſt of his ſervants into his preſence, without telling his intentions, and bade them

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take notice that their fellow-servant was no longer Robert the butler; but that his integrity had made him Mr. Blakeney, verger of St. Patrick's; an officer whose income was between thirty and forty pounds a year: yet he still continued for some years to serve his old master as his butler *.

Swift was known from this time by the appellation of *The Dean*. He was honoured by the populace as the champion, patron, and instructor of Ireland; and gained such power as, considered both in its extent and duration, scarcely any man has ever enjoyed without greater wealth or higher station.

He was from this important year the oracle of the traders, and the idol of the rabble, and by consequence was feared and courted by all to whom the kindness of the traders or the populace was necessary. The *Drapier* was a sign; the *Drapier* was a health; and which way soever the eye or the ear was turned, some tokens were found of the nation's gratitude to the *Drapier*.

The benefit was indeed great; he had rescued Ireland from a very oppressive and predatory invasion; and the popularity which he had gained he was diligent to keep, by appearing forward and zealous on every occasion where the publick interest was supposed to be involved. Nor did he much scruple to boast his influence; for when, upon some attempts to regulate the coin, Archbishop Boulter, then one of the Justices, accused him of exasperating the people,

* An account somewhat different from this is given by Mr. Sheridan in his Life of Swift, p. 211. R.

he exculpated himſelf by ſaying, "If I had lifted "up my finger, they would have torn you to "pieces."

But the pleaſure of popularity was ſoon interrupted by domeſtick miſery. Mrs. Johnſon, whoſe converſation was to him the great ſoftener of the ills of life, began in the year of the Drapier's triumph to decline; and two years afterwards was ſo waſted with ſickneſs, that her recovery was conſidered as hopeleſs.

Swift was then in England, and had been invited by Lord Bolingbroke to paſs the winter with him in France; but this call of calamity haſtened him to Ireland, where perhaps his preſence contributed to reſtore her to imperfect and tottering health.

He was now ſo much at eaſe, that (1727) he returned to England; where he collected three volumes of Miſcellanies in conjunction with Pope, who prefixed a querulous and apologetical Preface.

This important year ſent likewiſe into the world "Gulliver's Travels;" a production ſo new and ſtrange, that it filled the reader with a mingled emotion of merriment and amazement. It was received with ſuch avidity, that the price of the firſt edition was raiſed before the ſecond could be made; it was read by the high and the low, the learned and illiterate. Criticiſm was for a while loſt in wonder; no rules of judgement were applied to a book written in open defiance of truth and regularity. But when diſtinctions came to be made, the part which gave the leaſt pleaſure was that which deſcribes the

Flying

Flying Iſland, and that which gave moſt diſguſt muſt be the hiſtory of the Houyhnhnms.

While Swift was enjoying the reputation of his new work, the news of the King's death arrived; and he kiſſed the hands of the new King and Queen three days after their acceſſion.

By the Queen, when ſhe was Princeſs, he had been treated with ſome diſtinction, and was well received by her in her exaltation; but whether ſhe gave hopes which ſhe never took care to ſatisfy, or he formed expectations which ſhe never meant to raiſe, the event was, that he always afterwards thought on her with ſome diſpleaſure from breaking her promiſe of ſome medals which ſhe engaged to ſend him.

I know not whether ſhe had not, in her turn, ſome reaſon for complaint. A Letter was ſent her, not ſo much entreating, as requiring, her patronage of Mrs. Barber, an ingenious Iriſhwoman, who was then begging ſubſcriptions for her Poems. To this Letter was ſubſcribed the name of Swift, and it has all the appearances of his diction and ſentiments; but it was not written in his hand, and had ſome little improprieties. When he was charged with his Letter, he laid hold of the inaccuracies, and urged the improbability of the accuſation; but never denied it; he ſhuffles between cowardice and veracity, and talks big when he ſays nothing*.

He ſeems deſirous enough of recommencing courtier, and endeavoured to gain the kindneſs of Mrs.

* It is but juſtice to the Dean's memory, to refer to Mr. Sheridan's defence of him from this charge. See the Life of Swift, p. 458. R.

Howard,

Howard, remembering what Mrs. Maſham had performed in former times: but his flatteries were, like thoſe of other wits, unſucceſsful; the Lady either wanted power, or had no ambition of poetical immortality.

He was ſeized not long afterwards by a fit of giddineſs, and again heard of the ſickneſs and danger of Mrs. Johnſon. He then left the houſe of Pope, as it ſeems, with very little ceremony, finding "that two ſick friends cannot live together;" and did not write to him till he found himſelf at Cheſter.

He returned to a home of ſorrow: poor Stella was ſinking into the grave, and, after a languiſhing decay of about two months, died in her forty-fourth year, on January 28, 1728. How much he wiſhed her life, his papers ſhew; nor can it be doubted that he dreaded the death of her whom he loved moſt, aggravated by the conſciouſneſs that himſelf had haſtened it.

Beauty and the power of pleaſing, the greateſt external advantages that woman can deſire or poſſeſs, were fatal to the unfortunate Stella. The man whom ſhe had the misfortune to love was, as Delany obſerves, fond of ſingularity, and deſirous to make a mode of happineſs for himſelf, different from the general courſe of things and order of Providence. From the time of her arrival in Ireland he ſeems reſolved to keep her in his power, and therefore hindered a match ſufficiently advantageous, by accumulating unreaſonable demands, and preſcribing conditions that could not be performed. While ſhe was at her own diſpoſal he did not conſider his poſ-

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ſeſſion as ſecure; reſentment, ambition, or caprice, might ſeparate them; he was therefore reſolved to make "aſſurance double ſure," and to appropriate her by a private marriage, to which he had annexed the expectation of all the pleaſures of perfect friendſhip, without the uneaſineſs of conjugal reſtraint. But with this ſtate poor Stella was not ſatisfied; ſhe never was treated as a wife, and to the world ſhe had the appearance of a miſtreſs. She lived ſullenly on, in hope that in time he would own and receive her; but the time did not come till the change of his manners and depravation of his mind made her tell him, that "it was too late." She then gave up herſelf to ſorrowful reſentment, and died under the tyranny of him, by whom ſhe was in the higheſt degree loved and honoured.

What were her claims to this excentrick tenderneſs, by which the laws of nature were violated to retain her, curioſity will enquire; but how ſhall it be gratified? Swift was a lover; his teſtimony may be ſuſpected. Delany and the Iriſh ſaw with Swift's eyes, and therefore add little confirmation. That ſhe was virtuous, beautiful, and elegant, in a very high degree, ſuch admiration from ſuch a lover makes it very probable; but ſhe had not much literature, for ſhe could not ſpell her own language; and of her wit, ſo loudly vaunted, the ſmart ſayings which Swift himſelf has collected afford no ſplendid ſpecimen.

The reader of Swift's "Letter to a Lady on her "marriage," may be allowed to doubt whether his opinion of female excellence ought implicitly to be admitted; for if his general thoughts on women were

were ſuch as he exhibits, a very little ſenſe in a Lady would enrapture, and a very little virtue would aſtoniſh him. Stella's ſupremacy, therefore, was perhaps only local; ſhe was great, becauſe her aſſociates were little.

In ſome Remarks lately publiſhed on the Life of Swift, his marriage is mentioned as fabulous, or doubtful; but, alas! poor Stella, as Dr. Madden told me, related her melancholy ſtory to Dr. Sheridan, when he attended her as a clergyman to prepare for death; and Delany mentions it not with doubt, but only with regret. Swift never mentioned her without a ſigh. The reſt of his life was ſpent in Ireland, in a country to which not even power almoſt deſpotick, nor flattery almoſt idolatrous, could reconcile him. He ſometimes wiſhed to viſit England, but always found ſome reaſon to delay. He tells Pope, in the decline of life, that he hopes once more to ſee him; "but if not," ſays he, "we muſt part, as all human "beings have parted."

After the death of Stella, his benevolence was contracted, and his ſeverity exaſperated; he drove his acquaintance from his table, and wondered why he was deſerted. But he continued his attention to the publick, and wrote from time to time ſuch directions, admonitions, or cenſures, as the exigence of affairs, in his opinion, made proper; and nothing fell from his pen in vain.

In a ſhort poem on the Preſbyterians, whom he always regarded with deteſtation, he beſtowed one ſtricture upon Betteſworth, a lawyer eminent for his inſolence to the clergy, which, from a very conſiderable reputation, brought him into immediate and

univerſal

universal contempt. Bettesworth, enraged at his disgrace and loss, went to Swift, and demanded whether he was the author of that poem? "Mr. "Bettesworth," answered he, "I was in my youth "acquainted with great lawyers, who, knowing my "disposition to satire, advised me, that if any scoun- "drel or blockhead whom I had lampooned should "ask, 'Are you the author of this paper?' I should "tell him that I was not the author; and therefore "I tell you, Mr. Bettesworth, that I am not the au- "thor of these lines."

Bettesworth was so little satisfied with this account, that he publickly professed his resolution of a violent and corporal revenge; but the inhabitants of St. Patrick's district embodied themselves in the Dean's defence. Bettesworth declared in Parliament, that Swift had deprived him of twelve hundred pounds a year.

Swift was popular a while by another mode of beneficence. He set aside some hundreds to be lent in small sums to the poor, from five shillings, I think, to five pounds. He took no interest, and only required that, at repayment, a small fee should be given to the accomptant: but he required that the day of promised payment should be exactly kept. A severe and punctilious temper is ill qualified for transactions with the poor; the day was often broken, and the loan was not repaid. This might have been easily foreseen; but for this Swift had made no provision of patience or pity. He ordered his debtors to be sued. A severe creditor has no popular character; what then was likely to be said of him who employs the catchpoll under the appearance of charity? The clamour against him was loud, and the resentment of the populace outrageous;

rageous; he was therefore forced to drop his ſcheme, and own the folly of expecting punctuality from the poor *.

His aſperity continually increaſing, condemned him to ſolitude; and his reſentment of ſolitude ſharpened his aſperity. He was not, however, totally deſerted; ſome men of learning, and ſome women of elegance, often viſited him; and he wrote from time to time either verſe or proſe; of his verſes he willingly gave copies, and is ſuppoſed to have felt no diſcontent when he ſaw them printed. His favourite maxim was, "Vive la bagatelle:" he thought trifles a neceſſary part of life, and perhaps found them neceſſary to himſelf. It ſeems impoſſible to him to be idle, and his diſorders made it difficult or dangerous to be long ſeriouſly ſtudious, or laboriouſly diligent. The love of eaſe is always gaining upon age, and he had one temptation to petty amuſements peculiar to himſelf; whatever he did, he was ſure to hear applauded; and ſuch was his predominance over all that approached, that all their applauſes were probably ſincere. He that is much flattered ſoon learns to flatter himſelf: we are commonly taught our duty by fear or ſhame, and how can they act upon the man who hears nothing but his own praiſes?

As his years increaſed, his fits of giddineſs and deafneſs grew more frequent, and his deafneſs made

* This account is contradicted by Mr. Sheridan, who with great warmth aſſerts, from his own knowledge, that there was not one ſyllable of truth in this whole account from the beginning to the end. *See Life of Swift*, p. 457. R.

conversation difficult: they grew likewise more severe, till in 1736, as he was writing a poem called "The Legion Club," he was seized with a fit so painful, and so long continued, that he never after thought it proper to attempt any work of thought or labour.

He was always careful of his money, and was therefore no liberal entertainer; but was less frugal of his wine than of his meat. When his friends of either sex came to him, in expectation of a dinner, his custom was to give every one a shilling, that they might please themselves with their provision. At last his avarice grew too powerful for his kindness; he would refuse a bottle of wine, and in Ireland no man visits where he cannot drink.

Having thus excluded conversation, and desisted from study, he had neither business nor amusement; for, having by some ridiculous resolution, or mad vow, determined never to wear spectacles, he could make little use of books in his latter years: his ideas therefore, being neither renovated by discourse, nor increased by reading, wore gradually away, and left his mind vacant to the vexations of the hour, till at last his anger was heightened into madness.

He however permitted one book to be published, which had been the production of former years; "Polite Conversation," which appeared in 1738. The "Directions for Servants" was printed soon after his death. These two performances shew a mind incessantly attentive, and, when it was not employed upon great things,

things, buſy with minute occurrences. It is apparent that he muſt have had the habit of noting whatever he obſerved; for ſuch a number of particulars could never have been aſſembled by the power of recollection.

He grew more violent, and his mental powers declined till (1741) it was found neceſſary that legal guardians ſhould be appointed of his perſon and fortune. He now loſt diſtinction. His madneſs was compounded of rage and fatuity. The laſt face that he knew was that of Mrs. Whiteway; and her he ceaſed to know in a little time. His meat was brought him cut into mouthfuls; but he would never touch it while the ſervant ſtaid, and at laſt, after it had ſtood perhaps an hour, would eat it walking; for he continued his old habit, and was on his feet ten hours a day.

Next year (1742) he had an inflammation in his left eye, which ſwelled it to the ſize of an egg, with boils in other parts; he was kept long waking with the pain, and was not eaſily reſtrained by five attendants from tearing out his eye.

The tumour at laſt ſubſided; and a ſhort interval of reaſon enſuing, in which he knew his phyſician and his family, gave hopes of his recovery; but in a few days he ſunk into a lethargick ſtupidity, motionleſs, heedleſs, and ſpeechleſs. But it is ſaid, that, after a year of total ſilence, when his houſekeeper, on the 30th of November, told him that the uſual bonfires and illuminations were preparing to celebrate his birth-day, he anſwered, "It is all "folly; they had better let it alone."

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It is remembered, that he afterwards ſpoke now and then, or gave ſome intimation of a meaning; but at laſt ſunk into a perfect ſilence, which continued till about the end of October, 1744, when, in his ſeventy-eighth year, he expired without a ſtruggle.

WHEN Swift is confidered as an author, it is juft to eftimate his powers by their effects. In the reign of Queen Anne he turned the ftream of popularity againft the Whigs, and muft be confeffed to have dictated for a time the political opinions of the Englifh nation. In the fucceeding reign he delivered Ireland from plunder and oppreffion; and fhewed that wit, confederated with truth, had fuch force as authority was unable to refift. He faid truly of himfelf, that Ireland "was his debtor." It was from the time when he firft began to patronize the Irifh, that they may date their riches and profperity. He taught them firft to know their own intereft, their weight, and their ftrength, and gave them fpirit to affert that equality with their fellow-fubjects to which they have ever fince been making vigorous advances, and to claim thofe rights which they have at laft eftablifhed. Nor can they be charged with ingratitude to their benefactor; for they reverenced him as a guardian, and obeyed him as a dictator.

In his works he has given very different fpecimens both of fentiments and expreffion. His "Tale of a Tub" has little refemblance to his other pieces. It exhibits a vehemence and rapidity of mind, a copioufnefs of images, and vivacity of diction, fuch as he afterwards never poffeffed, or never exerted. It is of a mode fo diftinct and peculiar, that it muft be confidered by itfelf; what is true of that, is not true of any thing elfe which he has written.

In his other works is found an equable tenour of eafy language, which rather trickles than flows.

His delight was in ſimplicity. That he has in his works no metaphor, as has been ſaid, is not true; but his few metaphors ſeem to be received rather by neceſſity than choice. He ſtudied purity; and though perhaps all his ſtrictures are not exact, yet it is not often that ſolecifms can be found; and whoever depends on his authority may generally conclude himſelf ſafe. His ſentences are never too much dilated or contracted; and it will not be eaſy to find any embarraſſment in the complication of his clauſes, any inconſequence in his connections, or abruptneſs in his tranſitions.

His ſtyle was well ſuited to his thoughts, which are never ſubtiliſed by nice diſquiſitions, decorated by ſparkling conceits, elevated by ambitious ſentences, or variegated by far-ſought learning. He pays no court to the paſſions; he excites neither ſurpriſe nor admiration; he always underſtands himſelf; and his readers always underſtand him: the peruſer of Swift wants little previous knowledge; it will be ſufficient that he is acquainted with common words and common things; he is neither required to mount elevations, nor to explore profundities; his paſſage is always on a level, along ſolid ground, without aſperities, without obſtruction.

This eaſy and ſafe conveyance of meaning it was Swift's deſire to attain, and for having attained he deſerves praiſe. For purpoſes merely didactick, when ſomething is to be told that was not known before, it is the beſt mode; but againſt that inattention by which known truths are ſuffered to lie neglected, it makes no proviſion; it inſtructs, but does not perſuade.

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By his political education he was aſſociated with the Whigs; but he deſerted them when they deſerted their principles, yet without running into the contrary extreme; he continued throughout his life to retain the diſpoſition which he aſſigns to the "Church-"of-England Man," of thinking commonly with the Whigs of the State, and with the Tories of the Church.

He was a churchman rationally zealous; he deſired the proſperity, and maintained the honour, of the Clergy; of the Diſſenters he did not wiſh to infringe the toleration, but he oppoſed their encroachments.

To his duty as Dean he was very attentive. He managed the revenues of his church, with exact œconomy; and it is ſaid by Delany, that more money was under his direction, laid out in repairs, than had ever been in the ſame time ſince its firſt erection. Of his choir he was eminently careful; and, though he neither loved nor underſtood muſick, took care that all the ſingers were well qualified, admitting none without the teſtimony of ſkilful judges.

In his church he reſtored the practice of weekly communion, and diſtributed the ſacramental elements in the moſt ſolemn and devout manner with his own hand. He came to church every morning, preached commonly in his turn, and attended the evening anthem, that it might not be negligently performed.

He read the ſervice "rather with a ſtrong, nervous "voice, than in a graceful manner; his voice was "ſharp and high-toned, rather than harmonious."

He entered upon the clerical ſtate with hope to excel in preaching; but complained, that, from the

time of his political controverſies, "he could only "preach pamphlets." This cenſure of himſelf, if judgement be made from thoſe ſermons which have been printed, was unreaſonably ſevere.

The ſuſpicions of his irreligion proceeded in a great meaſure from his dread of hypocriſy; inſtead of wiſhing to ſeem better, he delighted in ſeeming worſe than he was. He went in London to early prayers, leſt he ſhould be ſeen at church; he read prayers to his ſervants every morning with ſuch dexterous ſecrecy, that Dr. Delany was ſix months in his houſe before he knew it. He was not only careful to hide the good which he did, but willingly incurred the ſuſpicion of evil which he did not. He forgot what himſelf had formerly aſſerted, that hypocriſy is leſs miſchievous than open impiety. Dr. Delany, with all his zeal for his honour, has juſtly condemned this part of his character.

The perſon of Swift had not many recommendations. He had a kind of muddy complexion, which, though he waſhed himſelf with oriental ſcrupuloſity, did not look clear. He had a countenance ſour and ſevere, which he ſeldom ſoftened by any appearance of gaiety. He ſtubbornly reſiſted any tendency to laughter.

To his domeſticks he was naturally rough; and a man of a rigorous temper, with that vigilance of minute attention which his works diſcover, muſt have been a maſter that few could bear. That he was diſpoſed to do his ſervants good, on important occaſions, is no great mitigation; benefaction can be but rare, and tyrannick peeviſhneſs is perpetual. He did not ſpare the ſervants of others. Once, when

when he dined alone with the Earl of Orrery, he ſaid of one that waited in the room, "That man "has, ſince we ſat to the table, committed fifteen "faults." What the faults were, Lord Orrery, from whom I heard the ſtory, had not been attentive enough to diſcover. My number may perhaps not be exact.

In his œconomy he practiſed a peculiar and offenſive parſimony, without diſguiſe or apology. The practice of ſaving being once neceſſary, became habitual, and grew firſt ridiculous, and at laſt deteſtable. But his avarice, though it might exclude pleaſure, was never ſuffered to encroach upon his virtue. He was frugal by inclination, but liberal by principle; and if the purpoſe to which he deſtined his little accumulations be remembered, with his diſtribution of occaſional charity, it will perhaps appear, that he only liked one mode of expence better than another, and ſaved merely that he might have ſomething to give. He did not grow rich by injuring his ſucceſſors, but left both Laracor and the Deanery more valuable than he found them.—With all this talk of his covetouſneſs and generoſity, it ſhould be remembered, that he was never rich. The revenue of his Deanery was not much more than ſeven hundred a year.

His beneficence was not graced with tenderneſs or civility; he relieved without pity, and aſſiſted without kindneſs; ſo that thoſe who were fed by him could hardly love him.

He made a rule to himſelf to give but one piece at a time, and therefore always ſtored his pocket with coins of different value.

Whatever he did, he ſeemed willing to do in a manner peculiar to himſelf, without ſufficiently conſidering, that ſingularity, as it implies a contempt of the general practice, is a kind of defiance which juſtly provokes the hoſtility of ridicule; he, therefore, who indulges peculiar habits, is worſe than others, if he be not better.

Of his humour, a ſtory told by Pope * may afford a ſpecimen.

"Dr. Swift has an odd, blunt way, that is "miſtaken, by ſtrangers, for ill-nature.—'Tis ſo odd, "that there's no deſcribing it but by facts. I'll tell "you one that firſt comes into my head. One evening, Gay and I went to ſee him: you know how "intimately we were all acquainted. On our coming "in, 'Heyday, gentlemen, (ſays the Doctor) what's "the meaning of this viſit? How came you to "leave the great Lords, that you are ſo fond of, to "come hither to ſee a poor Dean!'—'Becauſe we "would rather ſee you than any of them.'—'Ay, "any one that did not know ſo well as I do might "believe you. But ſince you are come, I muſt get "ſome ſupper for you, I ſuppoſe.'—'No, Doctor, "we have ſupped already.'—'Supped already? that's "impoſſible! why, 'tis not eight o'clock yet.—That's "very ſtrange; but if you had not ſupped, I muſt "have got ſomething for you.—Let me ſee, what "ſhould I have had? A couple of lobſters; ay, "that would have done very well; two ſhillings—"tarts, a ſhilling: but you will drink a glaſs of "wine with me, though you ſupped ſo much before "your uſual time only to ſpare my pocket?'—'No,

* Spence.

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"we had rather talk with you than drink with you.' "—'But if you had fupped with me, as in all rea-"fon you ought to have done, you muft then have "drunk with me.—A bottle of wine, two fhillings "—two and two is four, and one is five; juft two-"and-fix-pence a-piece. There, Pope, there's half "a crown for you, and there's another for you, Sir; "for I won't fave any thing by you, I am deter-"mined.'—This was all faid and done with his "ufual ferioufnefs on fuch occafions; and, in fpite "of every thing we could fay to the contrary, he "actually obliged us to take the money."

In the intercourfe of familiar life, he indulged his difpofition to petulance and farcafm, and thought himfelf injured if the licentioufnefs of his raillery, the freedom of his cenfures, or the petulance of his frolicks, was refented or repreffed. He predominated over his companions with very high afcendency, and probably would bear none over whom he could not predominate. To give him advice was, in the ftyle of his friend Delany, "to venture to fpeak to "him." This cuftomary fuperiority foon grew too delicate for truth; and Swift, with all his penetration, allowed himfelf to be delighted with low flattery.

On all common occafions, he habitually affects a ftyle of arrogance, and dictates rather than perfuades. This authoritative and magifterial language he expected to be received as his peculiar mode of jocularity: but he apparently flattered his own arrogance by an affumed imperioufnefs, in which he was ironical only to the refentful, and to the fubmiffive fufficiently ferious.

He told ftories with great felicity, and delighted in doing what he knew himfelf to do well; he was there-

therefore captivated by the reſpectful ſilence of a ſteady liſtener, and told the ſame tales too often.

He did not, however, claim the right of talking alone; for it was his rule, when he had ſpoken a minute, to give room by a pauſe for any other ſpeaker. Of time, on all occaſions, he was an exact computer, and knew the minutes required to every common operation.

It may be juſtly ſuppoſed that there was in his converſation, what appears ſo frequently in his Letters, an affectation of familiarity with the Great, an ambition of momentary equality ſought and enjoyed by the neglect of thoſe ceremonies which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed as the barriers between one order of ſociety and another. This tranſgreſſion of regularity was by himſelf and his admirers termed greatneſs of ſoul. But a great mind diſdains to hold any thing by courteſy, and therefore never uſurps what a lawful claimant may take away. He that encroaches on another's dignity, puts himſelf in his power; he is either repelled with helpleſs indignity, or endured by clemency and condeſcenſion.

Of Swift's general habits of thinking, if his Letters can be ſuppoſed to afford any evidence, he was not a man to be either loved or envied. He ſeems to have waſted life in diſcontent, by the rage of neglected pride, and the languiſhment of unſatisfied deſire. He is querulous and faſtidious, arrogant and malignant; he ſcarcely ſpeaks of himſelf but with indignant lamentations, or of others but with inſolent ſuperiority when he is gay, and with angry contempt when he is gloomy. From the Letters that paſs between him and Pope it might be inferred that they,

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with Arbuthnot and Gay, had engroſſed all the underſtanding and virtue of mankind; that their merits filled the world; or that there was no hope of more. They ſhew the age involved in darkneſs, and ſhade the picture with ſullen emulation.

When the Queen's death drove him into Ireland, he might be allowed to regret for a time the interception of his views, the extinction of his hopes, and his ejection from gay ſcenes, important employment, and ſplendid friendſhips; but when time had enabled reaſon to prevail over vexation, the complaints, which at firſt were natural, became ridiculous becauſe they were uſeleſs. But querulouſneſs was now grown habitual, and he cried out when he probably had ceaſed to feel. His reiterated wailings perſuaded Bolingbroke that he was really willing to quit his deanery for an Engliſh pariſh; and Bolingbroke procured an exchange, which was rejected; and Swift ſtill retained the pleaſure of complaining.

The greateſt difficulty that occurs, in analyſing his character, is to diſcover by what depravity of intellect he took delight in revolving ideas, from which almoſt every other mind ſhrinks with diſguſt. The ideas of pleaſure, even when criminal, may ſolicit the imagination; but what has diſeaſe, deformity, and filth, upon which the thoughts can be allured to dwell? Delany is willing to think that Swift's mind was not much tainted with this groſs corruption before his long viſit to Pope. He does not conſider how he degrades his hero, by making him at fifty-nine the pupil of turpitude, and liable to the malig-

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nant influence of an afcendant mind. But the truth is, that Gulliver had defcribed his Yahoos before the vifit; and he that had formed thofe images had nothing filthy to learn.

I have here given the character of Swift as he exhibits himfelf to my perception; but now let another be heard who knew him better. Dr. Delany, after long acquaintance, defcribes him to Lord Orrery in thefe terms:

"My Lord, when you confider Swift's fingular, "peculiar, and moft variegated vein of wit, always "rightly intended (although not always fo rightly "directed), delightful in many inftances, and falu-"tary even where it is moft offenfive; when you "confider his ftrict truth, his fortitude in refifting "oppreffion and arbitary power; his fidelity in "friendfhip, his fincere love and zeal for religion, "his uprightnefs in making right refolutions, and "his fteadinefs in adhering to them; his care of his "church, its choir, its œconomy, and its income; "his attention to all thofe that preached in his ca-"thedral, in order to their amendment in pronuncia-"tion and ftyle; as alfo his remarkable attention to "the intereft of his fucceffors, preferably to his "own prefent emoluments; his invincible patriotifm, "even to a country which he did not love; his very "various, well-devifed, well-judged, and extenfive "charities, throughout his life, and his whole for-"tune (to fay nothing of his wife's) conveyed to "the fame Chriftian purpofes at his death, charities, "from which he could enjoy no honour, advantage, "or fatisfaction of any kind in this world; when "you confider his ironical and humorous, as well

" as his ferious fchemes, for the promotion of true
" religion and virtue, his fuccefs in foliciting for the
" Firft Fruits and Twentieths, to the unfpeakable
" benefit of the Eftablifhed Church of Ireland; and
" his felicity (to rate it no higher) in giving occa-
" fion to the building of fifty new churches in
" London:

" All this confidered, the character of his life
" will appear like that of his writings; they will
" both bear to be re-confidered and re-examined with
" the utmoft attention, and always difcover new
" beauties and excellences upon every examination.

" They will bear to be confidered as the fun, in
" which the brightnefs will hide the blemifhes; and
" whenever petulant ignorance, pride, malignity,
" or envy, interpofes to cloud or fully his fame, I
" will take upon me to pronounce, that the eclipfe
" will not laft long.

" To conclude—No man ever deferved better of
" his country, than Swift did of his; a fteady,
" perfevering, inflexible friend; a wife, a watchful,
" and a faithful counfellor, under many fevere trials
" and bitter perfecutions, to the manifeft hazard
" both of his liberty and fortune.

" He lived a bleffing, he died a benefactor, and
" his name will ever live an honour, to Ireland."

IN the poetical works of Dr. Swift there is not much upon which the critick can exercife his powers. They are often humorous, almoft always light, and have the qualities which recommend fuch compofitions, eafinefs and gaiety. They are, for the moft part, what their author intended. The diction is correct, the numbers are fmooth, and the rhymes exact. There feldom occurs a hard-laboured expreffion, or a redundant epithet; all his verfes exemplify his own definition of a good ftyle, they confift of " proper words in proper places."

To divide this collection into claffes, and fhew how fome pieces are grofs, and fome are trifling, would be to tell the reader what he knows already, and to find faults of which the author could not be ignorant, who certainly wrote not often to his judgement, but his humour.

It was faid, in a Preface to one of the Irifh editions, that Swift had never been known to take a fingle thought from any writer, ancient or modern. This is not literally true; but perhaps no writer can eafily be found that has borrowed fo little, or that, in all his excellences and all his defects, has fo well maintained his claim to be confidered as original.

BROOME.

BROOME.

WILLIAM BROOME was born in Cheſhire, as is ſaid, of very mean parents. Of the place of his birth, or the firſt part of his life, I have not been able to gain any intelligence. He was educated upon the foundation at Eton, and was captain of the ſchool a whole year, without any vacancy, by which he might have obtained a ſcholarſhip at King's College. Being by this delay, ſuch as is ſaid to have happened very rarely, ſuperannuated, he was ſent to St. John's College by the contributions of his friends, where he obtained a ſmall exhibition.

At his college he lived for ſome time in the ſame chamber with the well-known Ford, by whom I have formerly heard him deſcribed as a contracted ſcholar and a mere verſifier, unacquainted with life, and unſkilful in converſation. His addiction to metre was then ſuch, that his companions familiarly called him Poet. When he had opportunities of mingling with mankind, he cleared himſelf, as Ford likewiſe owned, from great part of his ſcholaſtick ruſt.

He appeared early in the world as a tranflator of the "Iliads" into profe, in conjunction with Ozell and Oldifworth. How their feveral parts were diftributed is not known. This is the tranflation of which Ozell boafted as fuperior, in Toland's opinion, to that of Pope: it has long fince vanifhed, and is now in no danger from the criticks.

He was introduced to Mr. Pope, who was then vifiting Sir John Cotton at Madingley near Cambridge, and gained fo much of his efteem, that he was employed, I believe, to make extracts from Euftathius for the notes to the tranflation of the "Iliad;" and in the volumes of poetry publifhed by Lintot, commonly called "Pope's Mifcellanies," many of his early pieces were inferted.

Pope and Broome were to be yet more clofely connected. When the fuccefs of the "Iliad" gave encouragement to a verfion of the "Odyffey," Pope, weary of the toil, called Fenton and Broome to his affiftance; and, taking only half the work upon himfelf, divided the other half between his partners, giving four books to Fenton, and eight to Broome. Fenton's books I have enumerated in his Life; to the lot of Broome fell the fecond, fixth, eighth, eleventh, twelfth, fixteenth, eighteenth, and twenty-third, together with the burthen of writing all the notes.

As this tranflation is a very important event in poetical hiftory, the reader has a right to know upon what grounds I eftablifh my narration. That the verfion was not wholly Pope's, was always known; he had mentioned the affiftance of two friends in his propofals, and at the end of the work fome account is given by Broome of their different parts,

which however mentions only five books as written by the coadjutors; the fourth and twentieth by Fenton; the sixth, the eleventh, and eighteenth, by himself; though Pope, in an advertisement prefixed afterwards to a new volume of his works, claimed only twelve. A natural curiosity, after the real conduct of so great an undertaking, incited me once to enquire of Dr. Warburton, who told me, in his warm language, that he thought the relation given in the note "a lie;" but that he was not able to ascertain the several shares. The intelligence which Dr. Warburton could not afford me, I obtained from Mr. Langton, to whom Mr. Spence had imparted it.

The price at which Pope purchased this assistance was three hundred pounds paid to Fenton, and five hundred to Broome, with as many copies as he wanted for his friends, which amounted to one hundred more. The payment made to Fenton I know not but by hearsay; Broome's is very distinctly told by Pope, in the notes to the Dunciad.

It is evident, that, according to Pope's own estimate, Broome was unkindly treated. If four books could merit three hundred pounds, eight and all the notes, equivalent at least to four, had certainly a right to more than six.

Broome probably considered himself as injured, and there was for some time more than coldness between him and his employer. He always spoke of Pope as too much a lover of money; and Pope pursued him with avowed hostility; for he not only named him disrespectfully in the "Dunciad," but quoted him more than once in the "Bathos," as a

proficient in the "Art of Sinking;" and in his enumeration of the different kinds of poets diſtinguiſhed for the profound, he reckons Broome among "the Parrots who repeat another's words in ſuch a "hoarſe odd tune as makes them ſeem their own." I have been told that they were afterwards reconciled; but I am afraid their peace was without friendſhip.

He afterwards publiſhed a Miſcellany of Poems, which is inſerted, with corrections, in the late compilation.

He never roſe to a very high dignity in the Church. He was ſome time rector of Sturſton in Suffolk, where he married a wealthy widow; and afterwards, when the King viſited Cambridge (1728), became Doctor of Laws. He was (1733) preſented by the Crown to the rectory of Pulham in Norfolk, which he held with Oakley Magna in Suffolk, given him by the Lord Cornwallis, to whom he was chaplain, and who added the vicarage of Eye in Suffolk; he then reſigned Pulham, and retained the other two.

Towards the cloſe of his life he grew again poetical, and amuſed himſelf with tranſlating Odes of Anacreon, which he publiſhed in the "Gentleman's "Magazine," under the name of Cheſter.

He died at Bath, November 16, 1745, and was buried in the Abbey Church.

Of Broome, though it cannot be ſaid that he was a great poet, it would be unjuſt to deny that he was an excellent verſifier; his lines are ſmooth and ſonorous, and his diction is ſelect and elegant. His rhymes are ſometimes unſuitable; in his "Melancholy," he makes breath rhyme to birth in one place, and to earth in another. Thoſe faults occur but ſeldom; and

and he had ſuch power of words and numbers as fitted him for tranſlation; but, in his original works, recollection ſeems to have been his buſineſs more than invention. His imitations are ſo apparent, that it is part of his reader's employment to recall the verſes of ſome former poet. Sometimes he copies the moſt popular writers, for he ſeems ſcarcely to endeavour at concealment; and ſometimes he picks up fragments in obſcure corners. His lines to Fenton,

Serene, the ſting of pain thy thoughts beguile,
And make afflictions objects of a ſmile,

brought to my mind ſome lines on the death of Queen Mary, written by Barnes, of whom I ſhould not have expected to find an imitator;

But thou, O Muſe! whoſe ſweet nepenthean tongue
Can charm the pangs of death with deathleſs ſong,
Canſt *ſtinging plagues* with eaſy *thoughts beguile,*
Make pains and tortures *objects of a ſmile.*

To detect his imitations were tedious and uſeleſs. What he takes he ſeldom makes worſe; and he cannot be juſtly thought a mean man whom Pope choſe for an aſſociate, and whoſe co-operation was conſidered by Pope's enemies as ſo important, that he was attaked by Henley with this ludicrous diſtich:

Pope came off clean with Homer; but they ſay
Broome went before, and kindly ſwept the way.

P O P E.

ALEXANDER POPE was born in London, May 22, 1688, of parents whose rank or station was never ascertained: we are informed that they were of "gentle blood:" that his father was of a family of which the Earl of Downe was the head; and that his mother was the daughter of William Turner, Esquire, of York, who had likewise three sons, one of whom had the honour of being killed, and the other of dying, in the service of Charles the First; the third was made a general officer in Spain, from whom the sister inherited what sequestrations and forfeitures had left in the family.

This, and this only, is told by Pope; who is more willing, as I have heard observed, to shew what his father was not, than what he was. It is allowed that he grew rich by trade; but whether in a shop or on the Exchange was never discovered till Mr. Tyers told, on the authority of Mrs. Racket, that he was a linen-draper in the Strand. Both parents were papists.

Pope was from his birth of a conſtitution tender and delicate; but is ſaid to have ſhewn remarkable gentleneſs and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition. The weakneſs of his body continued through his life *; but the mildneſs of his mind perhaps ended with his childhood. His voice when he was young, was ſo pleaſing, that he was called in fondneſs "the "little Nightingale."

Being not ſent early to ſchool, he was taught to read by an aunt; and when he was ſeven or eight years old, became a lover of books. He firſt learned to write by imitating printed books; a ſpecies of penmanſhip in which he retained great excellence through his whole life, though his ordinary hand was not elegant.

When he was about eight, he was placed in Hampſhire under Taverner, a Romiſh prieſt, who, by a method very rarely practiſed, taught him the Greek and Latin rudiments together. He was now firſt regularly initiated in poetry by the peruſal of "Ogilby's Homer," and "Sandys' Ovid." Ogilby's aſſiſtance he never repaid with any praiſe; but of Sandys he declared, in his notes to the "Iliad," that Engliſh poetry owed much of its beauty to his tranſlations. Sandys very rarely attempted original compoſition.

From the care of Taverner, under whom his proficiency was conſiderable, he was removed to a ſchool

* This weakneſs was ſo great that he conſtantly wore ſtays, as I have been aſſured by a waterman at Twickenham, who, in lifting him into his boat, had often felt them. His method of taking the air on the water was to have a ſedan chair in the boat, in which he ſat with the glaſſes down. H.

at Twyford near Winchefter, and again to another fchool about Hyde-park Corner; from which he ufed fometimes to ftroll to the playhoufe; and was fo delighted with theatrical exhibitions, that he formed a kind of play from "Ogilby's Iliad," with fome verfes of his own intermixed, which he perfuaded his fchool-fellows to act, with the addition of his mafter's gardener, who perfonated Ajax.

At the two laft fchools he ufed to reprefent himfelf as having loft part of what Taverner had taught him; and on his mafter at Twyford he had already exercifed his poetry in a lampoon. Yet under thofe mafters he tranflated more than a fourth part of the "Metamorphofes." If he kept the fame proportion in his other exercifes, it cannot be thought that his lofs was great.

He tells of himfelf, in his poems, that "he lifp'd "in numbers;" and ufed to fay that he could not remember the time when he began to make verfes. In the ftyle of fiction it might have been faid of him as of Pindar, that, when he lay in his cradle, "the "bees fwarmed about his mouth."

About the time of the Revolution, his father, who was undoubtedly difappointed by the fudden blaft of Popifh profperity, quitted his trade, and retired to Binfield in Windfor Foreft, with about twenty thoufand pounds; for which, being confcientioufly determined not to entruft it to the government, he found no better ufe than that of locking it up in a cheft, and taking from it what his expences required; and his life was long enough to confume a great part of it, before his fon came to the inheritance.

To Binfield Pope was called by his father when he was about twelve years old; and there he had for a few months the aſſiſtance of one Deane, another prieſt, of whom he learned only to conſtrue a little of "Tully's Offices." How Mr. Deane could ſpend, with a boy who had tranſlated ſo much of "Ovid," ſome months over a ſmall part of "Tully's Offices," it is now vain to enquire.

Of a youth ſo ſucceſsfully employed, and ſo conſpicuouſly improved, a minute account muſt be naturally deſired; but curioſity muſt be contented with confuſed, imperfect, and ſometimes improbable intelligence. Pope, finding little advantage from external help, reſolved thenceforward to direct himſelf, and at twelve formed a plan of ſtudy, which he completed with little other incitement than the deſire of excellence.

His primary and principal purpoſe was to be a poet, with which his father accidentally concurred, by propoſing ſubjects, and obliging him to correct his performances by many reviſals; after which the old gentleman, when he was ſatisfied, would ſay, "theſe are good rhymes."

In his peruſal of the Engliſh poets he ſoon diſtinguiſhed the verſification of Dryden, which he conſidered as the model to be ſtudied, and was impreſſed with ſuch veneration for his inſtructor, that he perſuaded ſome friends to take him to the coffee-houſe which Dryden frequented, and pleaſed himſelf with having ſeen him.

Dryden died May 1, 1701, ſome days before Pope was twelve; ſo early muſt he therefore have felt the power of harmony, and the zeal of genius.

Who

Who does not wiſh that Dryden could have known the value of the homage that was paid him, and foreſeen the greatneſs of his young admirer?

The earlieſt of Pope's productions is his "Ode "on Solitude," written before he was twelve, in which there is nothing more than other forward boys have attained, and which is not equal to Cowley's performances at the ſame age.

His time was now wholly ſpent in reading and writing. As he read the Claſſicks, he amuſed himſelf with tranſlating them; and at fourteen made a verſion of the firſt book of the "Thebais," which, with ſome reviſion, he afterwards publiſhed. He muſt have been at this time, if he had no help, a conſiderable proficient in the Latin tongue.

By Dryden's Fables, which had then been not long publiſhed, and were much in the hands of poetical readers, he was tempted to try his own ſkill in giving Chaucer a more faſhionable appearance, and put "January and May," and the "Prologue of "the Wife of Bath," into modern Engliſh. He tranſlated likewiſe the Epiſtle of "Sappho to "Phaon" from Ovid, to complete the verſion which was before imperfect; and wrote ſome other ſmall pieces, which he afterwards printed.

He ſometimes imitated the Engliſh poets, and profeſſed to have written at fourteen his poem upon "Silence," after Rocheſter's "Nothing." He had now formed his verſification, and the ſmoothneſs of his numbers ſurpaſſed his original: but this is a ſmall part of his praiſe; he diſcovers ſuch acquaintance both with human and public affairs, as is not

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eaſily conceived to have been attainable by a boy of fourteen in Windſor Foreſt.

Next year he was deſirous of opening to himſelf new ſources of knowledge, by making himſelf acquainted with modern languages; and removed for a time to London, that he might ſtudy French and Italian, which, as he deſired nothing more than to read them, were by diligent application ſoon diſpatched. Of Italian learning he does not appear to have ever made much uſe in his ſubſequent ſtudies.

He then returned to Binfield, and delighted himſelf with his own poetry. He tried all ſtyles, and many ſubjects. He wrote a comedy, a tragedy, an epick poem, with panegyricks on all the princes of Europe; and, as he confeſſes, "thought himſelf "the greateſt genius that ever was." Self-confidence is the firſt requiſite to great undertakings. He, indeed, who forms his opinion of himſelf in ſolitude, without knowing the powers of other men, is very liable to errour: but it was the felicity of Pope to rate himſelf at his real value.

Moſt of his puerile productions were, by his maturer judgment, afterwards deſtroyed; "Alcander," the epick poem, was burnt by the perſuaſion of Atterbury. The tragedy was founded on the legend of St. Genevieve. Of the comedy there is no account.

Concerning his ſtudies it is related, that he tranſlated "Tully on Old Age;" and that, beſides his books of poetry and criticiſm, he read "Temple's "Eſſays" and "Locke on Human Underſtanding." His reading, though his favourite authors are not known, appears to have been ſufficiently extenſive

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and multifarious; for his early pieces ſhew, with ſufficient evidence, his knowledge of books.

He that is pleaſed with himſelf eaſily imagines that he ſhall pleaſe others. Sir William Trumbal, who had been ambaſſador at Conſtantinople, and ſecretary of ſtate, when he retired from buſineſs, fixed his reſidence in the neighbourhood of Binfield. Pope, not yet ſixteen, was introduced to the ſtateſman of ſixty, and ſo diſtinguiſhed himſelf, that their interviews ended in friendſhip and correſpondence. Pope was, through his whole life, ambitious of ſplendid acquaintance; and he ſeems to have wanted neither diligence nor ſucceſs in attracting the notice of the great; for from his firſt entrance into the world, and his entrance was very early, he was admitted to familiarity with thoſe whoſe rank or ſtation made them moſt conſpicuous.

From the age of ſixteen the life of Pope, as an author, may be properly computed. He now wrote his paſtorals, which were ſhewn to the poets and Criticks of that time; as they well deſerved, they were read with admiration, and many praiſes were beſtowed upon them and upon the Preface, which is both elegant and learned in a high degree; they were, however, not publiſhed till five years afterwards.

Cowley, Milton, and Pope, are diſtinguiſhed among the Engliſh Poets by the early exertion of their powers; but the works of Cowley alone were publiſhed in his childhood, and therefore of him only can it be certain that his puerile performances received no improvement from his maturer ſtudies.

At

At this time began his acquaintance with Wycherley, a man who ſeems to have had among his contemporaries his full ſhare of reputation, to have been eſteemed without virtue, and careſſed without good-humour. Pope was proud of his notice; Wycherley wrote verſes in his praiſe, which he was charged by Dennis with writing to himſelf, and they agreed for a while to flatter one another. It is pleaſant to remark how ſoon Pope learned the cant of an author, and began to treat criticks with contempt, though he had yet ſuffered nothing from them.

But the fondneſs of Wycherley was too violent to laſt. His eſteem of Pope was ſuch, that he ſubmitted ſome poems to his reviſion; and when Pope, perhaps proud of ſuch confidence, was ſufficiently bold in his criticiſms, and liberal in his alterations, the old ſcribbler was angry to ſee his pages defaced, and felt more pain from the detection than content from the amendment of his faults. They parted; but Pope always conſidered him with kindneſs, and viſited him a little time before he died.

Another of his early correſpondents was Mr. Cromwell, of whom I have learned nothing particular but that he uſed to ride a hunting in a tye-wig. He was fond, and perhaps vain, of amuſing himſelf with poetry and criticiſm; and ſometimes ſent his performances to Pope, who did not forbear ſuch remarks as were now-and-then unwelcome. Pope, in his turn, put the juvenile verſion of "Statius" into his hands for correction.

Their correſpondence afforded the publick its firſt knowledge of Pope's epiſtolary powers; for his Letters were given by Cromwell to one Mrs. Thomas;

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and ſhe many years afterwards ſold them to Curll, who inſerted them in a volume of his Miſcellanies.

Walſh, a name yet preſerved among the minor poets, was one of his firſt encouragers. His regard was gained by the Paſtorals, and from him Pope received the counſel from which he ſeems to have regulated his ſtudies. Walſh adviſed him to correctneſs, which, as he told him, the Engliſh poets had hitherto neglected, and which therefore was left to him as a baſis of fame; and being delighted with rural poems, recommended to him to write a paſtoral comedy, like thoſe which are read ſo eagerly in Italy; a deſign which Pope probably did not approve, as he did not follow it.

Pope had now declared himſelf a poet; and thinking himſelf entitled to poetical converſation, began at ſeventeen to frequent Will's, a coffee-houſe on the north ſide of Ruſſell-ſtreet in Covent-garden, where the wits of that time uſed to aſſemble, and where Dryden had, when he lived, been accuſtomed to preſide.

During this period of his life he was indefatigably diligent, and inſatiably curious; wanting health for violent, and money for expenſive pleaſures, and having excited in himſelf very ſtrong deſires of intellectual eminence, he ſpent much of his time over his books; but he read only to ſtore his mind with facts and images, ſeizing all that his authors preſented with undiſtinguiſhing voracity, and with an appetite for knowledge too eager to be nice. In a mind like his, however, all the faculties were at once involuntarily improving. Judgement is forced upon us by experience. He that reads many books muſt compare

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one opinion or one ſtyle with another; and, when he compares, muſt neceſſarily diſtinguiſh, reject, and prefer. But the account given by himſelf of his ſtudies was, that from fourteen to twenty he read only for amuſement, from twenty to twenty-ſeven for improvement and inſtruction; that in the firſt part of this time he deſired only to know, and in the ſecond he endeavoured to judge.

The paſtorals, which had been for ſome time handed about among poets and criticks, were at laſt printed (1790) in Tonſon's Miſcellany, in a volume which began with the Paſtorals of Philips, and ended with thoſe of Pope.

The ſame year was written the "Eſſay on Criti-"ciſm;" a work which diſplays ſuch extent of comprehenſion, ſuch nicety of diſtinction, ſuch acquaintance with mankind, and ſuch knowledge both of ancient and modern learning, as are not often attained by the matureſt age and longeſt experience. It was publiſhed about two years afterwards; and, being praiſed by Addiſon in the "Spectator" with ſufficient liberality, met with ſo much favour as enraged Dennis, "who," he ſays, "found himſelf attacked, with-"out any manner of provocation on his ſide, and at-"tacked in his perſon, inſtead of his writings, by "one who was wholly a ſtranger to him, at a time "when all the world knew he was perſecuted by "fortune; and not only ſaw that this was attempted "in a clandeſtine manner, with the utmoſt falſehood "and calumny, but found that all this was done by "a little affected hypocrite, who had nothing in "his mouth at the ſame time but truth, candour,

"friend-

"friendſhip, good-nature, humanity, and magna-"nimity."

How the attack was clandeſtine is not eaſily perceived, nor how his perſon is depreciated; but he ſeems to have known ſomething of Pope's character, in whom may be diſcovered an appetite to talk too frequently of his own virtues.

The pamphlet is ſuch as rage might be expected to dictate. He ſuppoſes himſelf to be aſked two queſtions; whether the Eſſay will ſucceed, and who or what is the author.

Its ſucceſs he admits to be ſecured by the falſe opinions then prevalent; the author he concludes to be "young and raw."

"Firſt, becauſe he diſcovers a ſufficiency beyond "his laſt ability, and hath raſhly undertaken a taſk "infinitely above his force. Secondly, while this "little author ſtruts, and affects the dictatorian air, "he plainly ſhews, that at the ſame time he is under "the rod; and, while he pretends to give laws to "others, is a pedantick ſlave to authority and opinion. "Thirdly, he hath, like ſchool-boys, borrowed both "from living and dead. Fourthly, he knows not "his own mind, and frequently contradicts himſelf. "Fifthly, he is almoſt perpetually in the wrong."

All theſe poſitions he attempts to prove by quotations and remarks; but his deſire to do miſchief is greater than his power. He has, however, juſtly criticiſed ſome paſſages in theſe lines:

> There are whom Heaven has bleſs'd with ſtore of wit,
> Yet want as much again to manage it;
> For Wit and Judgement ever are at ſtriſe—

It is apparent that wit has two meanings, and that what is wanted, though called wit, is truly judgement. So far Dennis is undoubtedly right; but not content with argument, he will have a little mirth, and triumphs over the first couplet in terms too elegant to be forgotten. "By the way, what rare "numbers are here! Would not one swear that this "youngster had espoused some antiquated Muse, who "had sued out a divorce on account of impotence "from some superannuated sinner; and, having been "p—xed by her former spouse, has got the gout "in her decrepit age, which makes her hobble so "damnably?" This was the man who would reform a nation sinking into barbarity.

In another place Pope himself allowed that Dennis had detected one of those blunders which are called "bulls." The first edition had this line,

> What is this wit—
> Where wanted scorn'd; and envied where acquir'd?

"How," says the critick, "can wit be scorn'd where "it is not? Is not this a figure frequently employed "in Hibernian land? The person that wants this wit "may indeed be scorned, but the scorn shews the "honour which the contemner has for wit." Of this remark Pope made the proper use, by correcting the passage.

I have preserved, I think, all that is reasonable in Dennis's criticism; it remains that justice be done to his delicacy. "For his acquaintance (says Dennis) he names Mr. Walsh, who had by no means "the qualification which this author reckons abso- "lutely necessary to a critick, it being very certain

"that he was, like this Eſſayer, a very indifferent "poet; he loved to be well-dreſſed; and I remem- "ber a little young gentleman whom Mr. Walſh uſed "to take into his company, as a double foil to his perſon "and capacity. Enquire, between Sunning-hill and "Oakingham, for a young, ſhort, ſquab gentleman, "the very bow of the God of Love, and tell me "whether he be a proper author to make perſonal "reflections?—He may extol the antients, but he "has reaſon to thank the gods that he was born a "modern; for had he been born of Grecian parents, "and his father conſequently had by law had the "abſolute diſpoſal of him, his life had been no "longer than that of one of his poems, the life of "half a day.—Let the perſon of a gentleman of his "parts be never ſo contemptible, his inward man "is ten times more ridiculous; it being impoſſible "that his outward form, though it be that of down- "right monkey, ſhould differ ſo much from human "ſhape, as his unthinking, immaterial part does from "human underſtanding." Thus began the hoſtility between Pope and Dennis, which, though it was ſuſpended for a ſhort time, never was appeaſed. Pope ſeems, at firſt, to have attacked him wantonly; but, though he always profeſſed to deſpiſe him, he diſcovers, by mentioning him very often, that he felt his force or his venom.

Of this Eſſay, Pope declared, that he did not expect the ſale to be quick, becauſe "not one gentle- "man in ſixty, even of liberal education, could un- "derſtand it." The gentlemen, and the education of that time, ſeem to have been of a lower character

than they are of this. He mentioned a thousand copies as a numerous impression.

Dennis was not his only censurer: the zealous Papists thought the monks treated with too much contempt, and Erasmus too studiously praised; but to these objections he had not much regard.

The "Essay" has been translated into French by Hamilton, author of the "Comte de Grammont," whose version was never printed, by Robotham, secretary to the King for Hanover, and by Resnel; and commented by Dr. Warburton, who has discovered in it such order and connection as was not perceived by Addison, nor, as is said, intended by the author.

Almost every poem, consisting of precepts, is so far arbitrary and immethodical, that many of the paragraphs may change places with no apparent inconvenience; for of two or more positions, depending upon some remote and general principle, there is seldom any cogent reason why one should precede the other. But for the order in which they stand, whatever it be, a little ingenuity may easily give a reason. "It is possible," says Hooker, "that, by long circumduction, from any one truth all truth may be "inferred." Of all homogeneous truths, at least of all truths respecting the same general end, in whatever series they may be produced, a concatenation by intermediate ideas may be formed, such as, when it is once shewn, shall appear natural; but if this order be reversed, another mode of connection equally specious may be found or made. Aristotle is praised for naming Fortitude first of the cardinal virtues, as that without which no other virtue can steadily be

 practised;

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practised; but he might, with equal propriety, have placed Prudence and Justice before it, since without Prudence Fortitude is mad; without Justice, it is mischievous.

As the end of method is perspicuity, that series is sufficiently regular that avoids obscurity; and where there is no obscurity, it will not be difficult to discover method.

In the "Spectator" was published the "Messiah," which he first submitted to the perusal of Steele, and corrected in compliance with his criticisms.

It is reasonable to infer, from his Letters, that the verses on the "Unfortunate Lady" were written about the time when his "Essay" was published. The Lady's name and adventures I have sought with fruitless enquiry *.

I can therefore tell no more than I have learned from Mr. Ruffhead, who writes with the confidence of one who could trust his information. She was a woman of eminent rank and large fortune, the ward of an uncle, who, having given her a proper education, expected like other guardians that she should make at least an equal match; and such he proposed to her, but found it rejected in favour of a young gentleman of inferior condition.

Having discovered the correspondence between the two lovers, and finding the young lady determined to abide by her own choice, he supposed that separation might do what can rarely be done by arguments, and sent her into a foreign country, where she was obliged

* See Gent. Mag. vol. LI. p. 314. N.

to

to converſe only with thoſe from whom her uncle had nothing to fear.

Her lover took care to repeat his vows; but his letters were intercepted and carried to her guardian, who directed her to be watched with ſtill greater vigilance, till of this reſtraint ſhe grew ſo impatient, that ſhe bribed a woman ſervant to procure her a ſword, which ſhe directed to her heart.

From this account, given with evident intention to raiſe the Lady's character, it does not appear that ſhe had any claim to praiſe, nor much to compaſſion. She ſeems to have been impatient, violent, and ungovernable. Her uncle's power could not have laſted long; the hour of liberty and choice would have come in time. But her deſires were too hot for delay, and ſhe liked ſelf-murder better than ſuſpence.

Nor is it diſcovered that the uncle, whoever he was, is with much juſtice delivered to poſterity as "a falſe Guardian;" he ſeems to have done only that for which a guardian is appointed; he endeavoured to direct his niece till ſhe ſhould be able to direct herſelf. Poetry has not often been worſe employed than in dignifying the amorous fury of a raving girl.

Not long after, he wrote the "Rape of the Lock," the moſt airy, the moſt ingenious, and the moſt delightful of all his compoſitions, occaſioned by a frolick of gallantry, rather too familiar, in which Lord Petre cut off a lock of Mrs. Arabella Fermor's hair. This, whether ſtealth or violence, was ſo much reſented, that the commerce of the two families, be-

fore very friendly, was interrupted. Mr. Caryl, a gentleman who, being ſecretary to King James's Queen, had followed his Miſtreſs into France, and who, being the author of "Sir Solomon Single," a comedy, and ſome tranſlations, was entitled to the notice of a Wit, ſolicited Pope to endeavour a reconciliation by a ludicrous poem, which might bring both the parties to a better temper. In compliance with Caryl's requeſt, though his name was for a long time marked only by the firſt and laſt letter, C—l, a poem of two cantos was written (1711), as is ſaid, in a fortnight, and ſent to the offended Lady, who liked it well enough to ſhew it; and, with the uſual proceſs of literary tranſactions, the author, dreading a ſurreptitious edition, was forced to publiſh it.

The event is ſaid to have been ſuch as was deſired, the pacification and diverſion of all to whom it related, except Sir George Brown, who complained with ſome bitterneſs, that, in the character of Sir Plume, he was made to talk nonſenſe. Whether all this be true I have ſome doubt; for at Paris, a few years ago, a niece of Mrs. Fermor, who preſided in an Engliſh Convent, mentioned Pope's work with very little gratitude, rather as an inſult than an honour; and ſhe may be ſuppoſed to have inherited the opinion of her family.

At its firſt appearance it was termed by Addiſon "merum ſal." Pope, however, ſaw that it was capable of improvement; and, having luckily contrived to borrow his machinery from the Roſicrucians, imparted the ſcheme with which his head was teeming to Addiſon, who told him that his work, as it

ſtood,

ſtood, was "a delicious little thing," and gave him no encouragement to retouch it.

This has been too haſtily conſidered as an inſtance of Addiſon's jealouſy; for, as he could not gueſs the conduct of the new deſign, or the poſſibilities of pleaſure compriſed in a fiction of which there had been no examples, he might very reaſonably and kindly perſuade the author to acquieſce in his own proſperity, and forbear an attempt which he conſidered as an unneceſſary hazard.

Addiſon's counſel was happily rejected. Pope foreſaw the future efflოreſcence of imagery then budding in his mind, and reſolved to ſpare no art, or induſtry of cultivation. The ſoft luxuriance of his fancy was already ſhooting, and all the gay varieties of diction were ready at his hand to colour and embelliſh it.

His attempt was juſtified by its ſucceſs. The "Rape of the Lock" ſtands forward, in the claſſes of literature, as the moſt exquiſite example of ludicrous poetry. Berkeley congratulated him upon the diſplay of powers more truly poetical than he has ſhewn before: with elegance of deſcription and juſtneſs of precepts, he had now exhibited boundleſs fertility of invention.

He always conſidered the intermixture of the machinery with the action as his moſt ſucceſsful exertion of poetical art. He indeed could never afterwards produce any thing of ſuch unexampled excellence. Thoſe performances, which ſtrike with wonder, are combinations of ſkilful genius with happy caſualty; and it is not likely that any felicity, like

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MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S S.M.

the discovery of a new race of preternatural agents, should happen twice to the same man.

Of this poem the author was, I think, allowed to enjoy the praise for a long time without disturbance. Many years afterwards Dennis published some remarks upon it, with very little force, and with no effect; for the opinion of the publick was already settled, and it was no longer at the mercy of criticism.

About this time he published the "Temple of "Fame," which, as he tells Steele in their correspondence, he had written two years before; that is, when he was only twenty-two years old, an early time of life for so much learning, and so much observation as that work exhibits.

On this poem Dennis afterwards published some remarks, of which the most reasonable is, that some of the lines represent Motion as exhibited by Sculpture.

Of the Epistle from "Eloisa to Abelard," I do not know the date. His first inclination to attempt a composition of that tender kind arose, as Mr. Savage told me, from his perusal of Prior's "Nut-brown "Maid." How much he has surpassed Prior's work, it is not necessary to mention, when perhaps it may be said with justice, that he has excelled every composition of the same kind. The mixture of religious hope and resignation gives an elevation and dignity to disappointed love, which images merely natural cannot bestow. The gloom of a convent strikes the imagination with far greater force than the solitude of a grove.

This

This piece was, however, not much his favourite in his latter years, though I never heard upon what principle he ſlighted it.

In the next year (1713) he publiſhed "Windſor "Foreſt;" of which part was, as he relates, written at ſixteen, about the ſame time as his Paſtorals; and the latter part was added afterwards; where the addition begins, we are not told. The lines relating to the Peace confeſs their own date. It is dedicated to Lord Lanſdowne, who was then in high reputation and influence among the Tories; and it is ſaid, that the concluſion of the poem gave great pain to Addiſon, both as a poet and a politician. Reports like this are often ſpread with boldneſs very diſproportionate to their evidence. Why ſhould Addiſon receive any particular diſturbance from the laſt lines of "Windſor Foreſt?" If contrariety of opinion could poiſon a politician, he would not live a day; and, as a poet, he muſt have felt Pope's force of genius much more from many other parts of his works.

The pain that Addiſon might feel it is not likely that he would confeſs; and it is certain that he ſo well ſuppreſſed his diſcontent, that Pope now thought himſelf his favourite; for, having been conſulted in the reviſal of "Cato," he introduced it by a Prologue; and, when Dennis publiſhed his Remarks, undertook, not indeed to vindicate, but to revenge his friend by a "Narrative of the Frenzy of John "Dennis."

There is reaſon to believe that Addiſon gave no encouragement to this diſingenuous hoſtility; for, ſays Pope, in a letter to him, "indeed your opinion,

"that

"that 'tis entirely to be neglected, would be my "own in my own cafe; but I felt more warmth here "than I did when I firft faw his book againft myfelf "(though indeed in two minutes it made me "heartily merry)." Addifon was not a man on whom fuch cant of fenfibility could make much impreffion. He left the pamphlet to itfelf, having difowned it to Dennis, and perhaps did not think Pope to have deferved much by his officioufnefs.

This year was printed in the "Guardian" the ironical comparifon between the Paftorals of Philips and Pope; a compofition of artifice, criticifm, and literature, to which nothing equal will eafily be found. The fuperiority of Pope is fo ingenioufly diffembled, and the feeble lines of Philips fo fkilfully preferred, that Steele, being deceived, was unwilling to print the paper, left Pope fhould be offended. Addifon immediately faw the writer's defign; and, as it feems, had malice enough to conceal his difcovery, and to permit a publication which, by making his friend Philips ridiculous, made him for ever an enemy to Pope.

It appears that about this time Pope had a ftrong inclination to unite the art of Painting with that of Poetry, and put himfelf under the tuition of Jervas. He was near-fighted, and therefore not formed by nature for a painter: he tried, however, how far he could advance, and fometimes perfuaded his friends to fit. A picture of Betterton, fuppofed to be drawn by him, was in the poffeffion of Lord Mansfield *:

* It is ftill at Caen Wood. N.

if

if this was taken from life, he muſt have begun to paint earlier; for Betterton was now dead. Pope's ambition of this new art produced ſome encomiaſtick verſes to Jervas, which certainly ſhew his power as a poet: but I have been told that they betray his ignorance of painting.

He appears to have regarded Betterton with kindneſs and eſteem; and after his death publiſhed, under his name, a verſion into modern Engliſh of Chaucer's Prologues, and one of his Tales, which, as was related by Mr. Harte, were believed to have been the performance of Pope himſelf by Fenton, who made him a gay offer of five pounds, if he would ſhew them in the hand of Betterton.

The next year (1713) produced a bolder attempt, by which profit was ſought as well as praiſe. The poems which he had hitherto written, however they might have diffuſed his name, had made very little addition to his fortune. The allowance which his father made him, though, proportioned to what he had, it might be liberal, could not be large; his religion hindered him from the occupation of any civil employment; and he complained that he wanted even money to buy books *.

He therefore reſolved to try how far the favour of the publick extended, by ſoliciting a ſubſcription to a verſion of the "Iliad," with large notes.

To print by ſubſcription was, for ſome time, a practice peculiar to the Engliſh. The firſt conſiderable work, for which this expedient was employed,

* Spence.

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is said to have been Dryden's "Virgil*;" and it had been tried with great success when the "Tatlers" were collected into volumes.

There was reason to believe that Pope's attempt would be successful. He was in the full bloom of reputation, and was personally known to almost all whom dignity of employment or splendour of reputation had made eminent; he conversed indifferently with both parties, and never disturbed the publick with his political opinions; and it might be naturally expected, as each faction then boasted its literary zeal, that the great men, who on other occasions practised all the violence of opposition, would emulate each other in their encouragement of a poet who delighted all, and by whom none had been offended.

With those hopes, he offered an English "Iliad" to subscribers, in six volumes in quarto, for six guineas; a sum, according to the value of money at that time, by no means inconsiderable, and greater than I believe to have been ever asked before. His proposal, however, was very favourably received; and the patrons of literature were busy to recommend his undertaking, and promote his interest. Lord Oxford, indeed, lamented that such a genius should be wasted upon a work not original; but proposed no means by which he might live without it. Addison recommended caution and moderation, and advised him not to be content with the praise of half the nation, when he might be universally favoured.

* Earlier than this, viz. in 1688, Milton's "Paradise Lost" had been published with great success by subscription, in folio, under the patronage of Mr. (afterwards Lord) Sommers. R.

The greatneſs of the deſign, the popularity of the author, and the attention of the literary world, naturally raiſed ſuch expectations of the future ſale, that the bookſellers made their offers with great eagerneſs; but the higheſt bidder was Bernard Lintot, who became proprietor on condition of ſupplying, at his own expence, all the copies which were to be delivered to ſubſcribers, or preſented to friends, and paying two hundred pounds for every volume.

Of the Quartos it was, I believe, ſtipulated that none ſhould be printed but for the author, that the ſubſcription might not be depreciated; but Lintot impreſſed the ſame pages upon a ſmall Folio, and paper perhaps a little thinner; and ſold exactly at half the price, for half a guinea each volume, books ſo little inferior to the Quartos, that by a fraud of trade, thoſe Folios, being afterwards ſhortened by cutting away the top and bottom, were ſold as copies printed for the ſubſcribers.

Lintot printed two hundred and fifty on royal paper in Folio, for two guineas a volume; of the ſmall Folio, having printed ſeventeen hundred and fifty copies of the firſt volume, he reduced the number in the other volumes to a thouſand.

It is unpleaſant to relate that the bookſeller, after all his hopes and all his liberality, was, by a very unjuſt and illegal action, defrauded of his profit. An edition of the Engliſh "Iliad" was printed in Holland in Duodecimo, and imported clandeſtinely for the gratification of thoſe who were impatient to read what they could not yet afford to buy. This fraud could only be counteracted by an edition equally cheap and more commodious; and Lintot was com-

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pelled to contract his folio at once into a duodecimo, and lose the advantage of an intermediate gradation. The notes, which in the Dutch copies were placed at the end of each book, as they had been in the large volumes, were now subjoined to the text in the same page, and are therefore more easily consulted. Of this edition two thousand five hundred were first printed, and five thousand a few weeks afterwards, but indeed great numbers were necessary to produce considerable profit.

Pope, having now emitted his proposals, and engaged not only his own reputation, but in some degree that of his friends who patronised his subscription, began to be frighted at his own undertaking; and finding himself at first embarrassed with difficulties, which retarded and oppressed him, he was for a time timorous and uneasy, had his nights disturbed by dreams of long journeys through unknown ways, and wished, as he said, "that somebody would hang "him *."

This misery, however, was not of long continuance; he grew by degrees more acquainted with Homer's images and expressions, and practice increased his facility of versification. In a short time he represents himself as dispatching regularly fifty verses a-day, which would shew him by an easy computation the termination of his labour.

His own diffidence was not his only vexation. He that asks a subscription soon finds that he has enemies. All who do not encourage him, defame him. He that wants money will rather be thought angry than poor: and he that wishes to save his money conceals

* Spence.

his

his avarice by his malice. Addiſon had hinted his ſuſpicion that Pope was too much a Tory; and ſome of the Tories ſuſpected his principles becauſe he had contributed to the "Guardian," which was carried on by Steele.

To thoſe who cenſured his politicks were added enemies yet more dangerous, who called in queſtion his knowledge of Greek, and his qualifications for a tranſlator of Homer. To theſe he made no publick oppoſition; but in one of his Letters eſcapes from them as well as he can. At an age like his, for he was not more than twenty-five, with an irregular education, and a courſe of life of which much ſeems to have paſſed in converſation, it is not very likely that he overflowed with Greek. But when he felt himſelf deficient he ſought aſſiſtance; and what man of learning would refuſe to help him? Minute enquiries into the force of words are leſs neceſſary in tranſlating Homer than other poets, becauſe his poſitions are general, and his repreſentations natural, with very little dependence on local or temporary cuſtoms, on thoſe changeable ſcenes of artificial life, which, by mingling original with accidental notions, and crowding the mind with images which time effaces, produces ambiguity in diction, and obſcurity in books. To this open diſplay of unadulterated nature it muſt be aſcribed, that Homer has fewer paſſages of doubtful meaning than any other poet either in the learned or in modern languages. I have read of a man, who being, by his ignorance of Greek, compelled to gratify his curioſity with the Latin printed on the oppoſite page, declared that, from the rude ſimplicity of the lines literally rendered,

dered, he formed nobler ideas of the Homeric majesty, than from the laboured elegance of polished versions.

Those literal translations were always at hand, and from them he could easily obtain his author's sense with sufficient certainty; and among the readers of Homer the number is very small of those who find much in the Greek more than in the Latin, except the musick of the numbers.

If more help was wanting, he had the poetical translation of "Eobanus Hessius," an unwearied writer of Latin verses; he had the French Homers of La Valterie and Dacier, and the English of Chapman, Hobbes, and Ogilby. With Chapman, whose work, though now totally neglected, seems to have been popular almost to the end of the last century, he had very frequent consultations, and perhaps never translated any passage till he had read his version, which indeed he has been sometimes suspected of using instead of the original.

Notes were likewise to be provided; for the six volumes would have been very little more than six pamphlets without them. What the mere perusal of the text could suggest, Pope wanted no assistance to collect or methodize; but more was necessary; many pages were to be filled, and learning must supply materials to wit and judgement. Something might be gathered from Dacier; but no man loves to be indebted to his contemporaries, and Dacier was accessible to common readers. Eustathius was therefore necessarily consulted. To read Eustathius, of whose work there was then no Latin version, I suspect Pope, if he had been willing, not to have

been able; ſome other was therefore to be found, who had leiſure as well as abilities; and he was doubtleſs moſt readily employed who would do much work for little money.

The hiſtory of the notes has never been traced. Broome, in his preface to his poems, declares himſelf the commentator "in part upon the Iliad;" and it appears from Fenton's Letter, preſerved in the Muſeum, that Broome was at firſt engaged in conſulting Euſtathius; but that after a time, whatever was the reaſon, he deſiſted; another man of Cambridge was then employed, who ſoon grew weary of the work; and a third, that was recommended by Thirlby, is now diſcovered to have been Jortin, a man ſince well known to the learned world, who complained that Pope, having accepted and approved his performance, never teſtified any curioſity to ſee him, and who profeſſed to have forgotten the terms on which he worked. The terms which Fenton uſes are very mercantile: "I think at firſt ſight that his "performance is very commendable, and have ſent "word for him to finiſh the 17th book, and to ſend "it with his demands for his trouble. I have here "encloſed the ſpecimen; if the reſt come before "the return, I will keep them till I receive your "order."

Broome then offered his ſervice a ſecond time, which was probably accepted, as they had afterwards a cloſer correſpondence. Parnell contributed the Life of Homer, which Pope found ſo harſh, that he took great pains in correcting it; and by his own diligence, with ſuch help as kindneſs or money could procure him, in ſomewhat more than five years

he completed his verſion of the "Iliad," with the notes. He began it in 1712, his twenty fifth-year; and concluded it in 1718, his thirtieth year.

When we find him tranſlating fifty lines a day, it is natural to ſuppoſe that he would have brought his work to a more ſpeedy concluſion. The "Iliad," containing leſs than ſixteen thouſand verſes, might have been diſpatched in leſs than three hundred and twenty days by fifty verſes in a day. The notes, compiled with the aſſiſtance of his mercenaries, could not be ſuppoſed to require more time than the text.

According to this calculation, the progreſs of Pope may ſeem to have been ſlow; but the diſtance is commonly very great between actual performances and ſpeculative poſſibility. It is natural to ſuppoſe, that as much as has been done to-day may be done to-morrow; but on the morrow ſome difficulty emerges, or ſome external impediment obſtructs. Indolence, interruption, buſineſs, and pleaſure, all take their turns of retardation; and every long work is lengthened by a thouſand cauſes that can, and ten thouſand that cannot, be recounted. Perhaps no extenſive and multifarious performance was ever effected within the term originally fixed in the undertaker's mind. He that runs againſt Time has an antagoniſt not ſubject to caſualties.

The encouragement given to this tranſlation, though report ſeems to have over-rated it, was ſuch as the world has not often ſeen. The ſubſcribers were five hundred and ſeventy-five. The copies, for which ſubſcriptions were given, were ſix hundred and fifty-four; and only ſix hundred and ſixty were printed. For theſe copies Pope had nothing

to pay; he therefore received, including the two hundred pounds a volume, five thouſand three hundred and twenty pounds four ſhillings without deduction, as the books were ſupplied by Lintot.

By the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription Pope was relieved from thoſe pecuniary diſtreſſes with which, notwithſtanding his popularity, he had hitherto ſtruggled. Lord Oxford had often lamented his diſqualification for publick employment, but never propoſed a penſion. While the tranſlation of "Homer" was in its progreſs, Mr. Craggs, then ſecretary of ſtate, offered to procure him a penſion, which, at leaſt during his miniſtry, might be enjoyed with ſecrecy. This was not accepted by Pope, who told him, however, that, if he ſhould be preſſed with want of money, he would ſend to him for occaſional ſupplies. Craggs was not long in power, and was never ſolicited for money by Pope, who diſdained to beg what he did not want.

With the product of this ſubſcription, which he had too much diſcretion to ſquander, he ſecured his future life from want, by conſiderable annuities. The eſtate of the Duke of Buckingham was found to have been charged with five hundred pounds a year, payable to Pope, which doubtleſs his tranſlation enabled him to purchaſe.

It cannot be unwelcome to literary curioſity, that I deduce thus minutely the hiſtory of the Engliſh "Iliad." It is certainly the nobleſt verſion of poetry which the world has ever ſeen; and its publication muſt therefore be conſidered as one of the great events in the annals of Learning.

To thofe who have fkill to eftimate the excellence and difficulty of this great work, it muft be very defirable to know how it was performed, and by what gradations it advanced to correctnefs. Of fuch an intellectual procefs the knowledge has very rarely been attainable; but happily there remains the original copy of the "Iliad," which, being obtained by Bolingbroke as a curiofity, defcended from him to Mallet, and is now, by the folicitation of the late Dr. Maty, repofited in the Mufeum.

Between this manufcript, which is written upon accidental fragments of paper, and the printed edition, there muft have been an intermediate copy, that was perhaps deftroyed as it returned from the prefs.

From the firft copy I have procured a few tranfcripts, and fhall exhibit firft the printed lines; then, in a fmall print, thofe of the manufcripts, with all their variations. Thofe words in the fmall print, which are given in Italicks, are cancelled in the copy, and the words placed under them adopted in their ftead.

The beginning of the firft book ftands thus:

The wrath of Peleus' fon, the direful fpring
Of all the Grecian woes, O Goddefs, fing,
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The fouls of mighty chiefs untimely flain.

The ftern Pelides' *rage*, O Goddefs fing,
wrath
Of all the woes *of Greece* the fatal fpring,
Grecian
That ftrew'd with *warriors* dead the Phrygian plain,
heroes
And *peopled the dark hell with heroes* flain;
fill'd the fhady hell with chiefs untimely

 Whofe

Whoſe limbs, unburied on the naked ſhore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore,
Since great Achill s and Atrides ſtrove;
Such was the ſovereign doom, and ſuch the will of Jove.

> Whoſe limbs, unburied on the hoſtile ſhore,
> Devouring dogs and greedy vultures tore,
> Since firſt *Atrides* and *Achilles* ſtrove;
> Such was the ſovereign doom and ſuch the will of Jove.

Declare, O Muſe, in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce ſtrife, from what offended Power?
Latona's ſon a dire contagion ſpread,
And heap'd the camp with mountains of the dead;
The King of men his reverend prieſt defy'd,
And for the King's offence the people dy'd.

> Declare, O Goddeſs, what offended Power
> Enflam'd their *rage*, in that *ill' omen'd* hour;
> anger fatal, hapleſs
> Phœbus himſelf the *dire* debate procur'd,
> fierce
> T' avenge the wrongs his injur'd prieſt endur'd;
> For this the God a dire infection ſpread,
> And heap'd the camp with millions of the dead:
> The King of Men the Sacred Sire defy'd,
> And for the King's offence the people dy'd.

For Chryſes ſought with coſtlygifts to gain
His captive daughter from the Victor's chain;
Suppliant the venerable Father ſtands,
Apollo's awful enſigns grace his hands;
By theſe he begs, and, lowly bending down,
Extends the ſceptre and the laurel crown.

> For Chryſes ſought by *preſents to regain*
> coſtly gifts to gain
> His captive daughter from the Victor's chain;
> Suppliant the venerable Father ſtands,
> Apollo's awful enſigns grac'd his hands.

By these he begs, and, lowly bending down
The golden sceptre and the laurel crown,
Presents the sceptre
For these as ensigns of his God he bare,
The God that sends his golden shafts afar;
Then low on earth, the venerable man,
Suppliant before the brother kings began.

He sued to all, but chief implor'd for grace,
The brother kings of Atreus' royal race;
Ye kings and warriours, may your vows be crown'd,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground;
May Jove restore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleasures of your native shore.

To all he sued, but chief implor'd for grace
The brother Kings of Atreus' royal race.
Ye *sons of Atreus*, may your vows be crown'd,
Kings and warriors
Your labours, by the Gods be all your labours crown'd;
So may the Gods your arms with conquest bless,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground;
Till *laid*
And crown your labours with deserv'd success;
May Jove restore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleasures of your native shore.

But, oh! relieve a wretched parent's pain,
And give Chryseis to these arms again;
If mercy fail, yet let my present move,
And dread avenging Phœbus, son of Jove.

But, oh! relieve a hapless parent's pain,
And give my daughter to these arms again;
Receive my gifts; if mercy fails, yet let my present move,
And fear *the God that deals his darts around*,
avenging Phœbus, son of Jove.

The Greeks, in shouts, their joint assent declare
The priest to reverence, and release the fair.

Not

Not so Atrides; he, with kingly pride,
Repuls'd the sacred Sire, and thus reply'd.

He said, the Greeks their joint assent declare,
The father said, the gen'rous Greeks relent,
T' accept the ransom, and release the fair:
Revere the priest, and speak their joint assent:
Not so *the tyrant*, he, with kingly pride,
Atrides
Repuls'd the sacred Sire, and thus reply'd.
[Not so the tyrant. DRYDEN.]

Of these lines, and of the whole first book, I am told that there was yet a former copy, more varied, and more deformed with interlineations.

The beginning of the second book varies very little from the printed page, and is therefore set down without a parallel; the few differences do not require to be elaborately displayed.

Now pleasing sleep had seal'd each mortal eye:
Stretch'd in their tents the Grecian leaders lie;
Th' Immortals slumber'd on their thrones above,
All but the ever-watchful eye of Jove.
To honour Thetis' son he bends his care,
And plunge the Greeks in all the woes of war.
Then bids an empty phantom rise to fight,
And thus *commands* the vision of the night:
directs
Fly hence, delusive dream, and, light as air,
To Agamemnon's royal tent repair;
Bid him in arms draw forth th' embattled train,
March all his legions to the dusty plain.
Now tell the King 'tis given him to destroy
Declare ev'n now
The lofty *walls* of wide-extended Troy;
tow'rs

For now no more the Gods with Fate contend;
At Juno's ſuit the heavenly factions end.
Deſtruction *hovers* o'er yon devoted wall,
hangs
And nodding Ilium waits th' impending fall.

Invocation to the catalogue of Ships.

Say, Virgins, ſeated round the throne divine,
All-knowing Goddeſſes! immortal Nine!
Since Earth's wide regions, Heaven's unmeaſur'd height,
And Hell's abyſs, hide nothing from your ſight,
(We, wretched mortals! loſt in doubts below,
But gueſs by rumour, and but boaſt we know)
Oh! ſay what heroes, fir'd by thirſt of fame,
Or urg'd by wrongs, to Troy's deſtruction came!
To count them all, demands a thouſand tongues,
A throat of braſs and adamantine lungs.

Now, Virgin Goddeſſes, immortal Nine!
That round Olympus' heavenly ſummit ſhine,
Who ſee through Heaven and Earth, and Hell profound,
And all things know, and all things can reſound!
Relate what armies ſought the Trojan land,
What nations follow'd, and what chiefs command;
(For doubtful fame diſtracts mankind below,
And nothing can we tell, and nothing know)
Without your aid, to count th' unnumber'd train,
A thouſand mouths, a thouſand tongues, were vain.

Book V. *v.* 1.

But Pallas now Tydides' ſoul inſpires,
Fills with her force, and warms with all her fires:
Above the Greeks his deathleſs fame to raiſe,
And crown her heroe with diſtinguiſh'd praiſe,
High on his helm celeſtial lightnings play,
His beamy ſhield emits a living ray;

Th' un-

Th' unwearied blaze inceſſant ſtreams ſupplies,
Like the red ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies.

But Pallas now Tydides' ſoul inſpires,
Fills with her *rage*, and warms with all her fires;
force,
O'er all the Greeks decrees his fame to raiſe,
Above the greeks *her warrior's* fame to raiſe,
his deathleſs
And crown her hero with *immortal* praiſe:
diſtinguiſh'd
Bright from his beamy *creſt* the light'nings play.
High on helm
From his broad buckle flaſh'd the living ray,
High on his helm celeſtial lightnings play.
His beamy ſhield emits a living ray.
The Goddeſs with her breath the flame ſupplies,
Bright as the ſtar whoſe fires in Autumn riſe;
Her breath divine thick ſtreaming flames ſupplies,
Bright as the ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies:
Th' unwearied blaze inceſſant ſtreams ſupplies,
Like the red ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies:

When firſt he rears his radiant orb to ſight,
And bath'd in ocean ſhoots a keener light,
Such glories Pallas on the chief beſtow'd,
Such from his arms the fierce effulgence flow'd;
Onward ſhe drives him, furious to engage,
Where the fight burns, and where the thickeſt rage.

When freſh he rears his radiant orb to ſight,
And gilds old Ocean with a blaze of light,
Bright as the ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies,
Freſh from the deep, and gilds the ſeas and ſkies:
Such glories Pallas on her chief beſtow'd,
Such ſparkling rays from his bright armour flow'd,
Such from his arms the fierce effulgence flow'd;
Onward ſhe drives him *headlong* to engage,
furious
Where the *war bleeds*, and where the *fierceſt* rage.
fight burns, thickeſt

The

The ſons of Dares firſt the combat fought,
A wealthy prieſt, but rich without a fault;
In Vulcan's fane the father's days were led,
The ſons to toils of glorious battle bred;

There liv'd a Trojan—Dares was his name,
The prieſt of Vulcan, rich, yet void of blame;
The ſons of Dares firſt the combat fought,
A wealthy prieſt, but rich without a fault.

Concluſion of Book VIII. *v.* 687.

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
O'er Heaven's clear azure ſpreads her ſacred light;
When not a breath diſturbs the deep ſerene,
And not a cloud o'ercaſts the ſolemn ſcene;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And ſtars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole:
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure ſhed,
And tip with ſilver every mountain's head:
Then ſhine the vales—the rocks in proſpect riſe,
A flood of glory burſts from all the ſkies;
The conſcious ſwains, rejoicing in the ſight,
Eye the blue vault, and bleſs the uſeful light.
So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays;
The long reflections of the diſtant fires
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the ſpires:
A thouſand piles the duſky horrors gild,
And ſhoot a ſhady luſtre o'er the field;
Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,
Whoſe umber'd arms by fits thick flaſhes ſend;
Loud neigh the courſers o'er their heaps of corn,
And ardent warriors wait the riſing morn.

As

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S ... MAHAL

As when in ſtillneſs of the ſilent night,
As when the moon in all her luſtre bright,
As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
O'er Heaven's *clear* azure *ſheds* her *ſilver* light;
pure ſpreads ſacred
As ſtill in air the trembling luſtre ſtood,
And o'er its golden border ſhoots a flood;
When *no looſe gale* diſturbs the deep ſerene,
not a breath
And *no dim* cloud o'ercaſts the ſolemn ſcene;
not a
Around her ſilver throne the planets glow,
And ſtars unnumber'd trembling beams beſtow;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And ſtars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole:
Clear gleams of light o'er the dark trees are ſeen,
o'er the dark trees a yellow ſheds,
O'er the dark trees a yellower *green* they ſhed,
gleam
verdure
And tip with ſilver all the *mountain* heads
foreſt
And tip with ſilver every mountain's head.
The vallies open, and the foreſts riſe,
The vales appear, the rocks in proſpect riſe,
Then ſhine the vales, the rocks in proſpect riſe,
All nature ſtands reveal'd before our eyes;
A flood of glory burſts from all the ſkies.
The conſcious ſhepherd, joyful at the ſight,
Eyes the blue vault, and numbers every light.
The conſcious *ſwains rejoicing at the* ſight,
ſhepherds gazing with delight
Eye the blue vault, and bleſs the *vivid* light,
glorious
uſeful
So many flames before *the navy* blaze,
proud Ilion
And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays,
Wide o'er the fields to Troy extend the gleams,
And tip the diſtant ſpires with fainter beams;
The long reflections of the diſtant fires
Gild the high walls, and tremble on the ſpires;
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the ſpires;

A thou-

A thousand fires at distant stations bright,
Gild the dark prospect, and dispel the night.

Of these specimens every man who has cultivated poetry, or who delights to trace the mind from the rudeness of its first conceptions to the elegance of its last, will naturally desire a great number; but most other readers are already tired, and I am not writing only to poets and philosophers.

The "Iliad" was published volume by volume, as the translation proceeded: the four first books appeared in 1715. The expectation of this work was undoubtedly high, and every man who had connected his name with criticism, or poetry, was desirous of such intelligence as might enable him to talk upon the popular topick. Halifax, who, by having been first a poet, and then a patron of poetry, had acquired the right of being a judge, was willing to hear some books while they were yet unpublished. Of this rehearsal Pope afterwards gave the following account *;

"The famous Lord Halifax was rather a pretender "to taste than really possessed of it.—When I had "finished the two or three first books of my transla-"tion of the "Iliad," that Lord desired to have the "pleasure of hearing them read at his house—Ad-"dison, Congreve, and Garth, were there at the "reading. In four or five places, Lord Halifax stopt "me very civilly, and with a speech each time "of much the same kind, 'I beg your pardon, Mr. "Pope; but there is something in that passage that "does not quite please me. Be so good as to mark

* Spence.

"the

" the place, and conſider it a little at your leiſure. " —I am ſure you can give it a little turn.'—I returned from Lord Halifax's with Dr. Garth, in his " chariot; and, as we were going along, was ſaying " to the Doctor, that my Lord had laid me under a " great deal of difficulty by ſuch looſe and general " obſervations: that I had been thinking over the " paſſages almoſt ever ſince, and could not gueſs at " what it was that offended his Lordſhip in either of " them. Garth laughed heartily at my embarraſſment; " ſaid, I had not been long enough acquainted with " Lord Halifax to know his way yet; that I need " not puzzle myſelf about looking thoſe places over " and over when I got home. 'All you need do " (ſays he) is to leave them juſt as they are; call on " Lord Halifax two or three months hence, thank " him for his kind obſervations on thoſe paſſages, " and then read them to him as altered. I have " known him much longer than you have, and will " be anſwerable for the event.' I followed his advice; " waited on Lord Halifax ſome time after; ſaid, I " hoped he would find his objections to thoſe paſ- " ſages removed; read them to him exactly as they " were at firſt: and his Lordſhip was extremely " pleaſed with them, and cryed out, 'Ay, now they " are perfectly right: nothing can be better."

It is ſeldom that the great or the wiſe ſuſpect that they are deſpiſed or cheated. Halifax, thinking this a lucky opportunity of ſecuring immortality, made ſome advances of favour and ſome overtures of advantage to Pope, which he ſeems to have received with ſullen coldneſs. All our knowledge of

of this tranſaction is derived from a ſingle Letter (Dec. 1, 1714), in which Pope ſays, "I am obliged "to you, both for the favours you have done me, "and thoſe you intend me. I diſtruſt neither your "will nor your memory, when it is to do good; "and if I ever become troubleſome or ſolicitous, it "muſt not be out of expectation, but out of grati-"tude. Your Lordſhip may cauſe me to live agree-"ably in the town, or contentedly in the country, "which is really all the difference I ſet between an "eaſy fortune and a ſmall one. It is indeed a high "ſtrain of generoſity in you to think of making me "eaſy all my life, only becauſe I have been ſo happy "as to divert you ſome few hours: but, if I may "have leave to add it is becauſe you think me no "enemy to my native country, there will appear a "better reaſon; for I muſt of conſequence be very "much (as I ſincerely am) yours, &c."

Theſe voluntary offers, and this faint acceptance, ended without effect. The patron was not accuſtomed to ſuch frigid gratitude; and the poet fed his own pride with the dignity of independence. They probably were ſuſpicious of each other. Pope would not dedicate till he ſaw at what rate his praiſe was valued; he would be "troubleſome out of gratitude, "not expectation." Halifax thought himſelf entitled to confidence; and would give nothing, unleſs he knew what he ſhould receive. Their commerce had its beginning in hope of praiſe on one ſide, and of money on the other, and ended becauſe Pope was leſs eager of money than Halifax of praiſe. It is not likely that Halifax had any perſonal benevolence

to Pope; it is evident that Pope looked on Halifax with ſcorn and hatred.

The reputation of this great work failed of gaining him a patron; but it deprived him of a friend. Addiſon and he were now at the head of poetry and criticiſm; and both in ſuch a ſtate of elevation, that, like the two rivals in the Roman ſtate, one could no longer bear an equal, nor the other a ſuperior. Of the gradual abatement of kindneſs between friends, the beginning is often ſcarcely diſcernible to themſelves, and the proceſs is continued by petty provocations, and incivilities ſometimes peeviſhly returned, and ſometimes contemptuouſly neglected, which would eſcape all attention but that of pride, and drop from any memory but that of reſentment. That the quarrel of theſe two wits ſhould be minutely deduced, is not to be expected from a writer to whom, as Homer ſays, "nothing but rumour has reached, and "who has no perſonal knowledge."

Pope doubtleſs approached Addiſon, when the reputation of their wit firſt brought them together, with the reſpect due to a man whoſe abilities were acknowledged, and who, having attained that eminence to which he was himſelf aſpiring, had in his hands the diſtribution of literary fame. He paid court with ſufficient diligence by his Prologue to "Cato," by his abuſe of Dennis, and with praiſe yet more direct, by his poem on the "Dialogues on Medals," of which the immediate publication was then intended. In all this there was no hypocriſy; for he confeſſed that he found in Addiſon ſomething more pleaſing than in any other man.

It

It may be ſuppoſed, that as Pope ſaw himſelf favoured by the world, and more frequently compared his own powers with thoſe of others, his confidence increaſed, and his ſubmiſſion leſſened; and that Addiſon felt no delight from the advances of a young wit, who might ſoon contend with him for the higheſt place. Every great man, of whatever kind be his greatneſs, has among his friends thoſe who officiouſly, or inſidiouſly, quicken his attention to offences, heighten his diſguſt, and ſtimulate his reſentment. Of ſuch adherents Addiſon doubtleſs had many; and Pope was now too high to be without them.

From the emiſſion and reception of the Propoſals for the "Iliad," the kindneſs of Addiſon ſeems to have abated. Jervas the painter once pleaſed himſelf (Aug. 20, 1714) with imagining that he had re-eſtabliſhed their friendſhip; and wrote to Pope that Addiſon once ſuſpected him of too cloſe a confederacy with Swift, but was now ſatisfied with his conduct. To this Pope anſwered, a week after, that his engagements to Swift were ſuch as his ſervices in regard to the ſubſcription demanded, and that the Tories never put him under the neceſſiity of aſking leave to be grateful. "But," ſays he, "as Mr. Addiſon "muſt be the judge in what regards himſelf, and "ſeems to have no very juſt one in regard to me, ſo "I muſt own to you I expect nothing but civility "from him." In the ſame Letter he mentions Philips, as having been buſy to kindle animoſity between them; but in a Letter to Addiſon, he expreſſes ſome conſciouſneſs of behaviour, inattentively deficient in reſpect.

Of Swift's induſtry in promoting the ſubſcription there remains the teſtimony of Kennet, no friend to either him or Pope.

"Nov. 2, 1713, Dr. Swift came into the coffee-"houſe, and had a bow from every body but me, "who, I confeſs, could not but deſpiſe him. When "I came to the anti-chamber to wait, before pray-"ers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and "buſineſs, and acted as maſter of requeſts.—Then "he inſtructed a young nobleman that the *beſt Poet* "*in England* was Mr. Pope (a papiſt), who had be-"gun a tranſlation of Homer into Engliſh verſe, for "which *he muſt have them all ſubſcribe*; for, ſays he, "the author *ſhall not* begin to print till *I have* a thou-"ſand guineas for him."

About this time it is likely that Steele, who was, with all his political fury, good natured and officious, procured an interview between theſe angry rivals, which ended in aggravated malevolence. On this occaſion, if the reports be true, Pope made his complaint with frankneſs and ſpirit, as a man undeſervedly neglected or oppoſed; and Addiſon affected a contemptuous unconcern, and, in a calm even voice, reproached Pope with his vanity, and, telling him of the improvements which his early works had received from his own remarks and thoſe of Steele, ſaid, that he, being now engaged in publick bnſineſs, had no longer any care for his poetical reputation: nor had any other deſire, with regard to Pope, than that he ſhould not, by too much arrogance, alienate the publick.

To this Pope is ſaid to have replied with great keenneſs and ſeverity, upbraiding Addiſon with per-

 petual

petual dependance, and with the abuſe of thoſe qualifications which he had obtained at the publick coſt, and charging him with mean endeavours to obſtruct the progreſs of riſing merit. The conteſt roſe ſo high, that they parted at laſt without any interchange of civility.

The firſt volume of "Homer" was (1715) in time publiſhed; and a rival verſion of the firſt "Iliad," for rivals the time of their appearance inevitably made them, was immediately printed, with the name of Tickell. It was ſoon perceived that, among the followers of Addiſon, Tickell had the preference, and the criticks and poets divided into factions. "I," ſays Pope, "have the town, that is, the mob, on "my ſide; but it is not uncommon for the ſmaller "party to ſupply by induſtry what it wants in num-"bers.—I appeal to the people as my rightful "judges, and, while they are not inclined to condemn "me, ſhall not fear the high-flyers at Button's." This oppoſition he immediaiely imputed to Addiſon, and complained of it in terms ſufficiently reſentful to Craggs, their common friend.

When Addiſon's opinion was aſked, he declared the verſions to be both good, but Tickell's the beſt that had ever been written; and ſometimes ſaid, that they were both good, but that Tickell had more of "Homer."

Pope was now ſufficiently irritated; his reputation and his intereſt were at hazard. He once intended to print together the four verſions of Dryden, Maynwaring, Pope, and Tickell, that they might be readily compared, and fairly eſtimated. This deſign ſeems

ſeems to have been defeated by the refuſal of Tonſon, who was the proprietor of the other three verſions.

Pope intended, at another time, a rigorous criticiſm of Tickell's tranſlation, and had marked a copy, which I have ſeen, in all places that appeared defective. But, while he was thus meditating defence or revenge, his adverſary ſunk before him without a blow; the voice of the publick was not long divided, and the preference univerſally given to Pope's performance.

He was convinced, by adding one circumſtance to another, that the other tranſlation was the work of Addiſon himſelf; but, if he knew it in Addiſon's lifetime, it does not appear that he told it. He left his illuſtrious antagoniſt to be puniſhed by what has been conſidered as the moſt painful of all reflections, the remembrance of a crime perpetrated in vain.

The other circumſtances of their quarrel were thus related by Pope *.

" Philips ſeemed to have been encouraged to abuſe
" me in coffee-houſes, and converſations: and Gil-
" don wrote a thing about Wycherley, in which he
" had abuſed both me and my relations very groſsly.
" Lord Warwick himſelf told me one day, that it
" was in vain for me to endeavour to be well with
" Mr. Addiſon; that his jealous temper would ne-
" ver admit of a ſettled friendſhip between us: and,
" to convince me of what he had ſaid, aſſured me,
" that Addiſon had encouraged Gildon to publiſh
" thoſe ſcandals, and had given him ten guineas af-

* Spence.

"ter they were publiſhed. The next day, while I "was heated with what I had heard, I wrote a letter "to Mr. Addiſon, to let him know that I was not "unacquainted with this behaviour of his; that, if "I was to ſpeak ſeverely of him in return for it, it "ſhould be not in ſuch a dirty way; that I ſhould "rather tell him, himſelf, fairly of his faults, and "allow his good qualities; and that it ſhould be "ſomething in the following manner; I then ad-"joined the firſt ſketch of what has ſince been called "my ſatire on Addiſon. Mr. Addiſon uſed me "very civilly ever after *."

The verſes on Addiſon, when they were ſent to Atterbury, were conſidered by him as the moſt excellent of Pope's performances; and the writer was adviſed, ſince he knew where his ſtrength lay, not to ſuffer it to remain unemployed.

This year (1715) being, by the ſubſcription, enabled to live more by choice, having perſuaded his father to ſell their eſtate at Binfield, he purchaſed, I think only for his life, that houſe at Twickenham to which his reſidence afterwards procured ſo much celebration, and removed thither with his father and mother.

Here he planted the vines and the quincunx, which his verſes mention; and being under the neceſſity of making a ſubterraneous paſſage to a garden on the other ſide of the road, he adorned it with foſſile bodies, and dignified it with the title of a grotto; a place of ſilence and retreat, from which he endea-

* See however the Life of Addiſon in the Biographia Britannica, laſt edit. R.

voured to perſuade his friends and himſelf that cares and paſſions could be excluded.

A grotto is not often the wiſh or pleaſure of an Engliſhman, who has more frequent need to ſolicit than exclude the ſun; but Pope's excavation was requiſite as an entrance to his garden, and, as ſome men try to be proud of their defects, he extracted an ornament from an inconvenience, and vanity produced a grotto where neceſſity enforced a paſſage. It may be frequently remarked of the ſtudious and ſpeculative, that they are proud of trifles, and that their amuſements ſeem frivolous and childiſh; whether it be that men, conſcious of great reputation, think themſelves above the reach of cenſure, and ſafe in the admiſſion of negligent indulgences, or that mankind expect from elevated genius an uniformity of greatneſs, and watch its degradation with malicious wonder; like him who, having followed with his eye an eagle into the clouds, ſhould lament that ſhe ever deſcended to a perch.

While the volumes of his "Homer" were annually publiſhed, he collected his former works (1717) into one quarto volume, to which he prefixed a Preface, written with great ſprightlineſs and elegance, which was afterwards reprinted, with ſome paſſages ſubjoined that he at firſt omitted; other marginal additions of the ſame kind he made in the later editions of his poems. Waller remarks, that poets loſe half their praiſe, becauſe the reader knows not what they have blotted. Pope's voracity of fame taught him the art of obtaining the accumulated honour, both of what he had publiſhed, and of what he had ſuppreſſed.

In this year his father died suddenly, in his seventy-fifth year, having passed twenty-nine years in privacy. He is not known but by the character which his son has given him. If the money with which he retired was all gotten by himself, he had traded very successfully in times when sudden riches were rarely attainable.

The publication of the "Iliad" was at last completed in 1720. The splendor and success of this work raised Pope many enemies, that endeavoured to depreciate his abilities. Burnet, who was afterwards a judge of no mean reputation, censured him in a piece called "Homerides" before it was published. Ducket likewise endeavoured to make him ridiculous. Dennis was the perpetual persecutor of all his studies. But, whoever his criticks were, their writings are lost; and the names, which are preserved, are preserved in the "Dunciad."

In this disastrous year (1720) of national infatuation, when more riches than Peru can boast were expected from the South Sea, when the contagion of avarice tainted every mind, and even poets panted after wealth, Pope was seized with the universal passion, and ventured some of his money. The stock rose in its price; and for a while he thought himself the Lord of thousands. But this dream of happiness did not last long; and he seems to have waked soon enough to get clear with the loss of what he once thought himself to have won, and perhaps not wholly of that.

Next year he published some select poems of his friend Dr. Parnell, with a very elegant Dedication to the Earl of Oxford; who, after all his struggles and

dangers, then lived in retirement, ſtill under the frown of a victorious faction, who could take no pleaſure in hearing his praiſe.

He gave the ſame year (1721) an edition of "Shakſpeare." His name was now of ſo much authority, that Tonſon thought himſelf entitled, by annexing it, to demand a ſubſcription of ſix guineas for Shakſpeare's plays in ſix quarto volumes; nor did his expectation much deceive him; for, of ſeven hundred and fifty which he printed, he diſperſed a great number at the price propoſed. The reputation of that edition indeed ſunk afterwards ſo low, that one hundred and forty copies were ſold at ſixteen ſhillings each.

On this undertaking, to which Pope was induced by a reward of two hundred and ſeventeen pounds twelve ſhillings, he ſeems never to have reflected afterwards without vexation; for Theobald, a man of heavy diligence, with very ſlender powers, firſt, in a book called "Shakeſpeare Reſtored," and then in a formal edition, detected his deficiencies with all the inſolence of victory; and as he was now high enough to be feared and hated, Theobald had from others all the help that could be ſupplied, by the deſire of humbling a haughty character.

From this time Pope became an enemy to editors, collaters, commentators, and verbal criticks; and hoped to perſuade the world, that he miſcarried in this undertaking only by having a mind too great for ſuch minute employment.

Pope in his edition undoubtedly did many things wrong, and left many thing undone; but let him not be defrauded of his due praiſe. He was the firſt

that knew, at leaſt the firſt that told, by what helps the text might be improved. If he inſpected the early editions negligently, he taught others to be more accurate. In his Preface he expanded with great ſkill and elegance the character which had been given of Shakſpeare by Dryden; and he drew the public attention upon his works, which, though often mentioned, had been little read.

Soon after the appearance of the "Iliad," reſolving not to let the general kindneſs cool, he publiſhed propoſals for a tranſlation of the "Odyſſey," in five volumes, for five guineas. He was willing, however, now to have aſſociates in his labour, being either weary with toiling upon another's thoughts, or having heard, as Ruffhead relates, that Fenton and Broome had already begun the work, and liking better to have them confederates than rivals.

In the patent, inſtead of ſaying that he had "tranſlated" the "Odyſſey," as he had ſaid of the "Iliad," he ſays that he had "undertaken" a tranſlation: and in the propoſals, the ſubſcription is ſaid to be not ſolely for his own uſe, but for that of "two of his friends who have aſſiſted him in this "work."

In 1723, while he was engaged in this new verſion, he appeared before the Lords at the memorable trial of Biſhop Atterbury, with whom he had lived in great familiarity, and frequent correſpondence. Atterbury had honeſtly recommended to him the ſtudy of the Popiſh controverſy, in hope of his converſion; to which Pope anſwered in a manner that cannot much recommend his principles, or his judgement. In queſtions and projects of learning, they

agreed

agreed better. He was called at the trial to give an account of Atterbury's domeftick life, and private employment, that it might appear how little time he had left for plots. Pope had but few words to utter, and in thofe few he made feveral blunders.

His Letters to Atterbury exprefs the utmoft efteem, tendernefs, and gratitude: "perhaps," fays he, "it "is not only in this world that I may have caufe to "remember the Bifhop of Rochefter." At their laft interview in the Tower, Atterbury prefented him with a Bible.

Of the "Odyffey" Pope tranflated only twelve books; the reft were the work of Broome and Fenton: the notes were written wholly by Broome, who was not over-liberally rewarded. The Publick was carefully kept ignorant of the feveral fhares; and an account was fubjoined at the conclufion, which is now known not to be true.

The firft copy of Pope's books, with thofe of Fenton, are to be feen in the Mufeum. The parts of Pope are lefs interlined than the "Iliad;" and the latter books of the "Iliad" lefs than the former. He grew dexterous by practice, and every fheet enabled him to write the next with more facility. The books of Fenton have very few alterations by the hand of Pope. Thofe of Broome have not been found; but Pope complained, as it is reported, that he had much trouble in correcting them.

His contract with Lintot was the fame as for the "Iliad," except that only one hundred pounds were to be paid him for each volume. The number of fubfcribers were five hundred and feventy-four, and of copies eight hundred and nineteen; fo that his profit,

profit, when he had paid his aſſiſtants, was ſtill very conſiderable. The work was finiſhed in 1725; and from that time he reſolved to make no more tranſlations.

The ſale did not anſwer Lintot's expectation; and he then pretended to diſcover ſomething of a fraud in Pope, and commenced or threatened a ſuit in Chancery.

On the Engliſh "Odyſſey" a criticiſm was publiſhed by Spence, at that time Prelector of Poetry at Oxford; a man whoſe learning was not very great, and whoſe mind was not very powerful. His criticiſm, however, was commonly juſt; what he thought, he thought rightly; and his remarks were recommended by his coolneſs and candour. In him Pope had the firſt experience of a critick without malevolence, who thought it as much his duty to diſplay beauties as expoſe faults; who cenſured with reſpect, and praiſed with alacrity.

With this criticiſm Pope was ſo little offended, that he ſought the acquaintance of the writer, who lived with him from that time in great familiarity, attended him in his laſt hours, and compiled memorials of his converſation. The regard of Pope recommended him to the great and powerful; and he obtained very valuable preferments in the Church.

Not long after, Pope was returning home from a viſit in a friend's coach, which, in paſſing a bridge, was overturned into the water; the windows were cloſed, and, being unable to force them open, he was in danger of immediate death, when the poſtilion ſnatched him out by breaking the glaſs, of which

the

the fragments cut two of his fingers in ſuch a manner, that he loſt their uſe.

Voltaire, who was then in England, ſent him a Letter of Conſolation. He had been entertained by Pope at his table, where he talked with ſo much groſſneſs, that Mrs. Pope was driven from the room. Pope diſcovered, by a trick, that he was a ſpy for the Court, and never conſidered him as a man worthy of confidence.

He ſoon afterwards (1727) joined with Swift, who was then in England, to publiſh three volumes of Miſcellanies, in which amongſt other things he inſerted the "Memoirs of a Pariſh Clerk," in ridicule of Burnet's importance in his own Hiſtory, and a "Debate upon Black and White Horſes," written in all the formalities of a legal proceſs by the aſſiſtance, as is ſaid, of Mr. Forteſcue, afterwards Maſter of the Rolls. Before theſe Miſcellanies is a preface ſigned by Swift and Pope, but apparently written by Pope; in which he makes a ridiculous and romantick complaint of the robberies committed upon authors by the clandeſtine ſeizure and ſale of their papers. He tells, in tragick ſtrains, how "the cabinets of the Sick and the cloſets of the Dead have been broken open and ranſacked;" as if thoſe violences were often committed for papers of uncertain and accidental value, which are rarely provoked by real treaſures; as if epigrams and eſſays were in danger where gold and diamonds are ſafe. A cat hunted for his muſk is, according to Pope's account, but the emblem of a wit winded by bookſellers.

His complaint, however, received ſome atteſtation; for the ſame year the Letters, written by him to

Mr.

Mr. Cromwell in his youth, were sold by Mrs. Thomas to Curll, who printed them.

In these Miscellanies was first published the "Art "of Sinking in Poetry," which, by such a train of consequences as usually passes in literary quarrels, gave in a short time, according to Pope's account, occasion to the "Dunciad."

In the following year (1728) he began to put Atterbury's advice in practice; and shewed his satirical powers by publishing the "Dunciad," one of his greatest and most elaborate performances, in which he endeavoured to sink into contempt all the writers by whom he had been attacked, and some others whom he thought unable to defend themselves.

At the head of the Dunces he placed poor Theobald, whom he accused of ingratitude; but whose real crime was supposed to be that of having revised "Shakspeare" more happily than himself. This satire had the effect which he intended, by blasting the characters which it touched. Ralph, who, unnecessarily interposing in the quarrel, got a place in a subsequent edition, complained that for a time he was in danger of starving, as the booksellers had no longer any confidence in his capacity.

The prevalence of this poem was gradual and slow: the plan if not wholly new, was little understood by common readers. Many of the allusions required illustration; the names were often expressed only by the initial and final letters, and, if they had been printed at length, were such as few had known or recollected. The subject itself had nothing generally interesting, for whom did it concern to know that one or another scribbler was a dunce? If therefore

fore it had been poſſible for thoſe who were attacked to conceal their pain and their reſentment, the "Dunciad" might have made its way very ſlowly in the world.

This, however, was not to be expected: every man is of importance to himſelf, and therefore, in his own opinion, to others; and, ſuppoſing the world already acquainted with all his pleaſures and his pains, is perhaps the firſt to publiſh injuries or misfortunes, which had never been known unleſs related by himſelf, and at which thoſe that hear them will only laugh; for no man ſympathiſes with the ſorrows of vanity.

The hiſtory of the "Dunciad" is very minutely related by Pope himſelf, in a Dedication which he wrote to Lord Middleſex in the name of Savage.

"I will relate the war of the 'Dunces' (for ſo it "has been commonly called), which began in the "year 1727, and ended in 1730."

"When Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope thought it pro-"per, for reaſons ſpecified in the Preface to their "Miſcellanies, to publiſh ſuch little pieces of theirs "as had caſually got abroad, there was added to "them the 'Treatiſe of the Bathos,' or the 'Art "of Sinking in Poetry.' It happened that, in one "chapter of this piece, the ſeveral ſpecies of bad "poets were ranged in claſſes, to which were pre-"fixed almoſt all the letters of the alphabet (the "greateſt part of them at random); but ſuch was "the number of poets eminent in that art, that ſome "one or other took every letter to himſelf: all fell "into ſo violent a fury, that, for half a year or "more, the common newſpapers (in moſt of which

" they had some property, as being hired writers) " were filled with the most abusive falsehoods and " scurrilities they could possibly devise; a liberty no " way to be wondered at in those people, and in " those papers, that, for many years during the un- " controuled licence of the press, had aspersed " almost all the great characters of the age; and " this with impunity, their own persons and names " being utterly secret and obscure.

" This gave Mr. Pope the thought, that he had " now some opportunity of doing good, by detecting " and dragging into light these common enemies of " mankind; since, to invalidate this universal slan- " der, it sufficed to shew what contemptible men " were the authors of it. He was not without hopes, " that, by manifesting the dulness of those who had " only malice to recommend them, either the book- " sellers would not find their account in employing " them, or the men themselves, when discovered, " want courage to proceed in so unlawful an occupa- " tion. This it was that gave birth to the 'Dun- " ciad;' and he thought it an happiness, that, by " the late flood of slander on himself, he had ac- " quired such a peculiar right over their names as " was necessary to this design.

" On the 12th of March, 1729, at St. James's, " that poem was presented to the King and Queen " (who had before been pleased to read it) by the " right honourable Sir Robert Walpole; and, some " days after, the whole impression was taken and " dispersed by several noblemen and persons of the " first distinction.

" It

"It is certainly a true obſervation, that no people "are ſo impatient of cenſure as thoſe who are the "greateſt ſlanderers, which was wonderfully exem-"plified on this occaſion. On the day the book was "firſt vended, a crowd of authors beſieged the ſhop; "intreaties, advices, threats of law and battery, nay "cries of treaſon, were all employed to hinder the "coming out of the 'Dunciad;' on the other ſide, "the bookſellers and hawkers made as great efforts "to procure it. What could a few poor authors do "againſt ſo great a majority as the publick? There "was no ſtopping a torrent with a finger; ſo out "it came.

"Many ludicrous circumſtances attended it. The "'Dunces' (for by this name they were called) held "weekly clubs, to conſult of hoſtilities againſt the "author: one wrote a Letter to a great miniſter, "aſſuring him Mr. Pope was the greateſt enemy the "government had; and another bought his image "in clay, to execute him in effigy; with which ſad "ſort of ſatisfaction the gentlemen were a little com-"forted.

"Some falſe editions of the book having an owl "in their frontiſpiece, the true one, to diſtinguiſh it, "fixed in his ſtead an aſs laden with authors. Then "another ſurreptitious one being printed with the "ſame aſs, the new edition in octavo returned for "diſtinction to the owl again Hence aroſe a great "conteſt of bookſellers againſt bookſellers, and ad-"vertiſements againſt advertiſements; ſome recom-"mending the edition of the owl, and others the "edition of the aſs; by which names they came to

6 "be

" be diftinguifhed, to the great honour alfo of the " gentlemen of the 'Dunciad'."

Pope appears by this narrative to have contemplated his victory over the "Dunces" with great exultation; and fuch was his delight in the tumult which he had raifed, that for a while his natural fenfibility was fufpended, and he read reproaches and invectives without emotion, confidering them only as the neceffary effects of that pain which he rejoiced in having given.

It cannot however be concealed that, by his own confeffion, he was the aggreffor: for nobody believes that the letters in the "Bathos" were placed at random; aud it may be difcovered that, when he thinks himfelf concealed, he indulges the common vanity of common men, and triumphs in thofe diftinctions which he affected to defpife. He is proud that his book was prefented to the King and Queen by the right honourable Sir Robert Walpole; he is proud that they had read it before; he is proud that the edition was taken off by the nobility and perfons of the firft diftinction.

The edition of which he fpeaks was, I believe, that which, by telling in the text the names, and in the notes the characters, of thofe whom he had fatirifed, was made intelligible and diverting. The criticks had now declared their approbation of the plan, and the common reader began to like it without fear; thofe who were ftrangers to petty literature, and therefore unable to decipher initials and blanks, had now names and perfons brought within their view; and delighted in the vifible effect of thofe fhafts of malice, which they had hitherto contemplated, as fhot into the air.

Dennis, upon the fresh provocation now given him, renewed the enmity which had for a time been appeased by mutual civilites; and published remarks, which he had till then suppressed, upon the "Rape "of the Lock." Many more grumbled in secret, or vented their resentment in the newspapers by epigrams or invectives.

Ducket, indeed, being mentioned as loving Burnet with "pious passion," pretended that his moral character was injured, and for some time declared his resolution to take vengeance with a cudgel. But Pope appeased him, by changing "pious passion" to "cordial friendship;" and by a note, in which he vehemently disclaims the malignity of meaning imputed to the first expression.

Aaron Hill, who was represented as diving for the prize, expostulated with Pope in a manner so much superior to all mean solicitation, that Pope was reduced to sneak and shuffle, sometimes to deny, and sometimes to apologize; he first endeavours to wound, and is then afraid to own that he meant a blow.

The "Dunciad," in the complete edition, is addressed to Dr. Swift: of the notes, part were written by Dr. Arbuthnot; and an apologetical Letter was prefixed, signed by Cleland, but supposed to have been written by Pope.

After this general war upon Dulness, he seems to have indulged himself a while in tranquillity; but his subsequent productions prove that he was not idle. He published (1731) a poem on "Taste," in which he very particularly and severely criticises the house, the furniture, the gardens, and the entertainments, of Timon, a man of great wealth and little taste.

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By Timon he was univerſally ſuppoſed, and by the Earl of Burlington, to whom the poem is addreſſed, was privately ſaid, to mean the Duke of Chandos; a man perhaps too much delighted with pomp and ſhow, but of a temper kind and beneficent, and who had conſequently the voice of the publick in his favour.

A violent outcry was therefore raiſed againſt the ingratitude and treachery of Pope, who was ſaid to have been indebted to the patronage of Chandos for a preſent of a thouſand pounds, and who gained the opportunity of inſulting him by the kindneſs of his invitation.

The receipt of the thouſand pounds Pope publickly denied; but, from the reproach which the attack on a character ſo amiable brought upon him, he tried all means of eſcaping. The name of Cleland was again employed in an apology, by which no man was ſatisfied; and he was at laſt reduced to ſhelter his temerity behind diſſimulation, and endeavour to make that diſbelieved which he never had confidence openly to deny. He wrote an exculpatory letter to the Duke, which was anſwered with great magnanimity, as by a man who accepted his excuſe without believing his profeſſions. He ſaid, that to have ridiculed his taſte, or his buildings, had been an indifferent action in another man; but that in Pope, after the reciprocal kindneſs that had been exchanged between them, it had been leſs eaſily excuſed.

Pope, in one of his Letters, complaining of the treatment which his poem had found, "owns that

"ſuch

"ſuch criticks can intimidate him, nay almoſt per-"ſuade him to write no more, which is a compli-"ment this age deſerves." The man who threatens the world is always ridiculous; for the world can eaſily go on without him, and in a ſhort time will ceaſe to miſs him. I have heard of an idiot, who uſed to revenge his vexations by lying all night upon the bridge. "There is nothing," ſays Juvenal, "that a man will not believe in his own favour." Pope had been flattered till he thought himſelf one of the moving powers in the ſyſtem of life. When he talked of laying down his pen, thoſe who ſat round him intreated and implored; and ſelf-love did not ſuffer him to ſuſpect that they went away and laughed.

The following year deprived him of Gay, a man whom he had known early, and whom he ſeemed to love with more tenderneſs than any other of his literary friends. Pope was now forty-four years old; an age at which the mind begins leſs eaſily to admit new confidence; and the will to grow leſs flexible; and when, therefore, the departure of an old friend is very acutely felt.

In the next year he loſt his mother, not by an unexpected death, for ſhe had laſted to the age of ninety-three: but ſhe did not die unlamented. The filial piety of Pope was in the higheſt degree amiable and exemplary; his parents had the happineſs of living till he was at the ſummit of poetical reputation, till he was at eaſe in his fortune, and without a rival in his fame, and found no diminution of his reſpect or tenderneſs. Whatever was his pride, to them he was obedient; and whatever was his irrita-

bility, to them he was gentle. Life has, among its ſoothing and quiet comforts, few things better to give than ſuch a ſon.

One of the paſſages of Pope's life, which ſeems to deſerve ſome enquiry, was a publication of Letters between him and many of his friends, which falling into the hands of Curll, a rapacious bookſeller of no good fame, were by him printed and ſold. This volume containing ſome Letters from noblemen, Pope incited a proſecution againſt him in the Houſe of Lords for breach of privilege, and attended himſelf to ſtimulate the reſentment of his friends. Curll appeared at the bar, and, knowing himſelf in no great danger, ſpoke of Pope with very little reverence: "He has," ſaid Curll, "a knack at verſifying, but "in proſe I think myſelf a match for him." When the orders of the Houſe were examined, none of them appeared to have been infringed; Curll went away triumphant; and Pope was left to ſeek ſome other remedy.

Curll's account was, that one evening a man in a clergyman's gown, but with a lawyer's band, brought and offered to ſale a number of printed volumes, which he found to be Pope's epiſtolary correſpondence; then he aſked no name, and was told none, but gave the price demanded, and thought himſelf authoriſed to uſe his purchaſe to his own advantage.

That Curll gave a true account of the tranſaction, it is reaſonable to believe, becauſe no falſehood was ever detected; and when, ſome years afterwards, I mentioned it to Lintot, the ſon of Bernard, he declared his opinion to be, that Pope knew better than

any

any body elſe how Curll obtained the copies, becauſe another parcel was at the ſame time ſent to himſelf, for which no price had ever been demanded, as he made known his reſolution not to pay a porter, and conſequently not to deal with a nameleſs agent.

Such care had been taken to make them publick, that they were ſent at once to two bookſellers; to Curll, who was likely to ſeize them as a prey; and to Lintot, who might be expected to give Pope information of the ſeeming injury. Lintot, I believe, did nothing: and Curll did what was expected. That to make them publick was the only purpoſe may be reaſonably ſuppoſed, becauſe the numbers, offered to ſale by the private meſſengers, ſhewed that hope of gain could not have been the motive of the impreſſion.

It ſeems that Pope, being deſirous of printing his Letters, and not knowing how to do, without imputation of vanity, what has in this country been done very rarely, contrived an appearance of compulſion; that, when he could complain that his Letters were ſurreptitiouſly publiſhed, he might decently and defenſively publiſh them himſelf.

Pope's private correſpondence, thus promulgated, filled the nation with the praiſes of his candour, tenderneſs, and benevolence, the purity of his purpoſes, and the fidelity of his friendſhip. There were ſome Letters which a very good or a very wiſe man would wiſh ſuppreſſed; but, as they had been already expoſed, it was impracticable now to retract them.

From the perufal of thofe Letters, Mr. Allen firft conceived the defire of knowing him; and with fo much zeal did he cultivate the friendfhip which he had newly formed, that, when Pope told his purpofe of vindicating his own property by a genuine edition, he offered to pay the coft.

This however Pope did not accept; but in time folicited a fubfcription for a Quarto volume, which appeared (1737), I believe, with fufficient profit. In the Preface he tells, that his Letters were repofited in a friend's library, faid to be the Earl of Oxford's, and that the copy thence ftolen was fent to the prefs. The ftory was doubtlefs received with different degrees of credit. It may be fufpected that the Preface to the Mifcellanies were written to prepare the publick for fuch an incident; and, to ftrengthen this opinion, James Worfdale, a painter, who was employed in clandeftine negotiations, but whofe veracity was very doubtful, declared that he was the meffenger who carried, by Pope's direction, the books to Curll.

When they were thus publifhed and avowed, as they had relation to recent facts, and perfons either then living or not yet forgotten, they may be fuppofed to have found readers; but, as the facts were minute, and the characters, being either private or literary, were little known, or little regarded, they awaked no popular kindnefs or refentment; the book never became much the fubject of converfation; fome read it as a contemporary hiftory, and fome perhaps as a model of epiftolary language; but thofe who read it did not talk of it. Not much therefore was added by it to fame or envy; nor do I remember

ber that it produced either publick praiſe, or publick cenſure.

It had, however, in ſome degree, the recommendation of novelty. Our language had few Letters, except thoſe of ſtateſmen. Howel, indeed, about a century ago, publiſhed his Letters, which are commended by Morhoff, and which alone, of his hundred volumes, continue his memory. Loveday's Letters were printed only once; thoſe of Herbert and Suckling are hardly known. Mrs. Phillips's [Orinda's] are equally neglected. And thoſe of Walſh ſeem written as exerciſes, and were never ſent to any living miſtreſs or friend. Pope's epiſtolary excellence had an open field; he had no Engliſh rival, living or dead.

Pope is ſeen in this collection as connected with the other contemporary wits, and certainly ſuffers no diſgrace in the compariſon; but it muſt be remembered, that he had the power of favouring himſelf; he might have originally had publication in his mind, and have written with care, or have afterwards ſelected thoſe which he had moſt happily conceived, or moſt diligently laboured; and I know not whether there does not appear ſomething more ſtudied and artificial in his productions than the reſt, except one long Letter by Bolingbroke, compoſed with all the ſkill and induſtry of a profeſſed author. It is indeed not eaſy to diſtinguiſh affectation from habit; he that has once ſtudiouſly formed a ſtyle, rarely writes afterwards with complete eaſe. Pope may be ſaid to write always with his reputation at his head; Swift, perhaps, like a man that remembered he was writing to Pope; but Arbuthnot, like one

who lets thoughts drop from his pen as they rise into his mind.

Before these Letters appeared, he published the first part of what he persuaded himself to think a system of Ethicks, under the title of an "Essay on "Man;" which, if his Letter to Swift (of Sept. 14, 1725) be rightly explained by the commentator, had been eight years under his consideration, and of which he seems to have desired the success with great solicitude. He had now many open, and doubtless many secret, enemies. The "Dunces" were yet smarting with the war; and the superiority which he publickly arrogated, disposed the world to wish his humiliation.

All this he knew, and against all this he provided. His own name, and that of his friend to whom the work is inscribed, were in the first editions carefully suppressed; and the poem, being of a new kind, was ascribed to one or another, as favour determined, or conjecture wandered; it was given, says Warburton, to every man, except him only who could write it. Those who like only when they like the author, and who are under the dominion of a name, condemned it; and those admired it who are willing to scatter praise at random, which while it is unappropriated excites no envy. Those friends of Pope, that were trusted with the secret, went about lavishing honours on the new-born poet, and hinting that Pope was never so much in danger from any former rival.

To those authors whom he had personally offended, and to those whose opinion the world considered as decisive, and whom he suspected of envy or malevolence,

levolence, he ſent his Eſſay as a preſent before publication, that they might defeat their own enmity by praiſes which they could not afterwards decently retract.

With theſe precautions, in 1733 was publiſhed the firſt part of the "Eſſay on Man." There had been for ſome time a report that Pope was buſy upon a Syſtem of Morality; but this deſign was not diſcovered in the new poem, which had a form and a title with which its readers were unacquainted. Its reception was not uniform; ſome thought it a very imperfect piece, though not without good lines. While the author was unknown, ſome, as will always happen, favoured him as an adventurer, and ſome cenſured him as an intruder; but all thought him above neglect; the ſale increaſed, and editions were multiplied.

The ſubſequent editions of the firſt Fpiſtle exhibited two memorable corrections. At firſt, the poet and his friend

> Expatiate freely o'er this ſcene of man,
> A mighty maze *of walks without a plan:*

For which he wrote afterwards,

> A mighty maze, *but not without a plan:*

for, if there was no plan, it was in vain to deſcribe to trace the maze.

The other alteration was of theſe lines;

> And ſpite of pride, *and in thy reaſon's ſpite,*
> One truth is clear, whatever is, is right:

but

but having afterwards discovered, or been shewn, that the "truth" which subsisted "in spite of rea-"son" could not be very "clear," he substituted

And spite of pride, *in erring reason's spite.*

To such oversights will the most vigorous mind be liable, when it is employed at once upon argument and poetry.

The second and third Epistles were published; and Pope was, I believe, more and more suspected of writing them; at last, in 1734, he avowed the fourth, and claimed the honour of a moral poet.

In the conclusion it is sufficiently acknowledged, that the doctrine of the "Essay on Man" was received from Bolingbroke, who is said to have ridiculed Pope, among those who enjoyed his confidence, as having adopted and advanced principles of which he did not perceive the consequence, and as blindly propagating opinions contrary to his own. That those communications had been consolidated into a scheme regularly drawn, and delivered to Pope, from whom it returned only transformed from prose to verse, has been reported, but hardly can be true. The Essay plainly appears the fabrick of a poet: what Bolingbroke supplied could be only the first principles; the order, illustration, and embellishments, must all be Pope's.

These principles it is not my business to clear from obscurity, dogmatism, or falsehood; but they were not immediately examined; philosophy and poetry have not often the same readers; and the Essay abounded in splendid amplifications and sparkling sentences,

ſentences, which were read and admired with no great attention to their ultimate purpoſe; its flowers caught the eye, which did not ſee what the gay foliage concealed, and for a time flouriſhed in the ſunſhine of univerſal approbation. So little was any evil tendency diſcovered, that, as innocence is unſuſpicious, many read it for a manual of piety.

Its reputation ſoon invited a tranſlator. It was firſt turned into French proſe, and afterwards by Reſnel into verſe. Both tranſlations fell into the hands of Crouſaz, who firſt, when he had the verſion in proſe, wrote a general cenſure, and afterwards reprinted Reſnel's verſion, with particular remarks upon every paragraph.

Crouſaz was a profeſſor of Switzerland, eminent for his treatiſe of Logick, and his "Examen de Pyrrhoniſme;" and, however little known or regarded here, was no mean antagoniſt. His mind was one of thoſe in which philoſophy and piety are happily united. He was accuſtomed to argument and diſquiſition, and perhaps was grown too deſirous of detecting faults; but his intentions were always right, his opinions were ſolid, and his religion pure.

His inceſſant vigilance for the promotion of piety diſpoſed him to look with diſtruſt upon all metaphyſical ſyſtems of Theology, and all ſchemes of virtue and happineſs purely rational; and therefore it was not long before he was perſuaded that the poſitions of Pope, as they terminated for the moſt part in natural religion, were intended to draw mankind away from revelation, and to repreſent the whole courſe of things as a neceſſary concatenation of in-

diſſoluble

diffoluble fatality; aud it is undeniable, that in many paffages a religious eye may eafily difcover expreffions not very favourable to morals, or to liberty.

About this time Warburton began to make his appearance in the firft ranks of learning. He was a man of vigorous faculties, a mind fervid and vehement, fupplied by inceffant and unlimited enquiry, with wonderful extent and variety of knowledge, which yet had not oppreffed his imagination, nor clouded his perfpicacity. To every work he brought a memory full fraught, together with a fancy fertile of original combinations, and at once exerted the powers of the fcholar, the reafoner, and the wit. But his knowledge was too multifarious to be always exact, and his purfuits too eager to be always cautious. His abilities gave him an haughty confidence, which he difdained to conceal or mollify; and his impatience of oppofition difpofed him to treat his adverfaries with fuch contemptuous fuperiority as made his readers commonly his enemies, and excited againft the advocate the wifhes of fome who favoured the caufe. He feems to have adopted the Roman Emperor's determination, *oderint dum metuant*; he ufed no allurements of gentle language, but wifhed to compel rather than perfuade.

His ftyle is copious without felection, and forcible without neatnefs; he took the words that prefented themfelves; his diction is coarfe and impure: and his fentences are unmeafured.

He had, in the early part of his life, pleafed himfelf with the notice of inferior wits, and correfponded with the enemies of Pope. A Letter was pro-

6 duced,

duced, when he had perhaps himſelf forgotten it, in which he tells Concanen, "Dryden I obſerve borrows for want of leiſure, and Pope for want of genius; Milton out of pride, and Addiſon out of modeſty." And when Theobald publiſhed "Shakſpeare," in oppoſition to Pope, the beſt notes were ſupplied by Warburton.

But the time was now come when Warburton was to change his opinion; and Pope was to find a defender in him who had contributed ſo much to the exaltation of his rival.

The arrogance of Warburton excited againſt him every artifice of offence, and therefore it may be ſuppoſed that his union with Pope was cenſured as hypocritical inconſtancy; but ſurely to think differently, at different times, of poetical merit, may be eaſily allowed. Such opinions are often admitted, and diſmiſſed, without nice examination. Who is there that has not found reaſon for changing his mind about queſtions of greater importance?

Warburton, whatever was his motive, undertook, without ſolicitation, to reſcue Pope from the talons of Crouſaz, by freeing him from the imputation of favouring fatality, or rejecting revelation; and from month to month continued a vindication of the "Eſſay on Man," in the literary journal of that time called "The Republick of Letters."

Pope, who probably began to doubt the tendency of his own work, was glad that the poſitions, of which he perceived himſelf not to know the full meaning, could by any mode of interpretation be made to mean well. How much he was pleaſed with his

his gratuitous defender, the following Letter evidently ſhews:

"SIR, April 11, 1739.

"I have juſt received from Mr. R. two more of "your Letters. It is in the greateſt hurry imagi-"nable that I write this; but I cannot help thank-"ing you in particular for your third Letter, which "is ſo extremely clear, ſhort, and full, that I think "Mr. Crouſaz ought never to have another anſwer, "and deſerved not ſo good an one. I can only ſay, "you do him too much honour, and me too much "right, ſo odd as the expreſſion ſeems; for you "have made my ſyſtem as clear as I ought to have "done, and could not. It is indeed the ſame ſyſ-"tem as mine, but illuſtrated with a ray of your "own, as they ſay our natural body is the ſame ſtill "when it is glorified. I am ſure I like it better than "I did before, and ſo will every man elſe. I know "I meant juſt what you explain; but I did not ex-"plain my own meaning ſo well as you. You un-"derſtand me as well as I do myſelf; but you ex-"preſs me better than I could expreſs myſelf. Pray "accept the ſincereſt acknowledgements. I cannot "but wiſh theſe Letters were put together in one "Book, and intend (with your leave) to procure a "tranſlation of part at leaſt, or of all, of them into "French; but I ſhall not proceed a ſtep without "your conſent and opinion, &c."

By this fond and eager acceptance of an exculpatory comment, Pope teſtified that, whatever might be the ſeeming or real import of the principles which he had received from Bolingbroke, he had

not intentionally attacked religion; and Bolingbroke, if he meant to make him, without his own conſent, an inſtrument of miſchief, found him now engaged, with his eyes open, on the ſide of truth.

It is known that Bolingbroke concealed from Pope his real opinions. He once diſcovered them to Mr. Hooke, who related them again to Pope, and was told by him that he muſt have miſtaken the meaning of what he heard; and Bolingbroke, when Pope's uneaſineſs incited him to deſire an explanation, declared that Hooke had miſunderſtood him.

Bolingbroke hated Warburton, who had drawn his pupil from him: and a little before Pope's death they had a diſpute, from which they parted with mutual averſion.

From this time Pope lived in the cloſeſt intimacy with his commentator, and amply rewarded his kindneſs and his zeal; for he introduced him to Mr. Murray, by whoſe intereſt he became preacher at Lincoln's Inn; and to Mr. Allen, who gave him his niece and his eſtate, and by conſequence a biſhoprick. When he died, he left him the property of his works; a legacy which may be reaſonably eſtimated at four thouſand pounds.

Pope's fondneſs for the "Eſſay on Man" appeared by his deſire of its propagation. Dobſon, who had gained reputation by his verſion of Prior's "Solomon," was employed by him to tranſlate it into Latin verſe, and was for that purpoſe ſome time at Twickenham; but he left his work, whatever was the reaſon, unfiniſhed; and, by Benſon's invitation, undertook the longer taſk of "Paradiſe Loſt." Pope then deſired his friend to find a ſcholar who ſhould

turn his Eſſay into Latin proſe; but no ſuch performance has ever appeared.

Pope lived at this time *among the Great*, with that reception and reſpect to which his works entitled him, and which he had not impaired by any private miſconduct or factious partiality. Though Bolingbroke was his friend, Walpole was not his enemy; but treated him with ſo much conſideration as, at his requeſt, to ſolicit and obtain from the French Miniſter an abbey for Mr. Southcot, which he conſidered himſelf as obliged to reward, by this exertion of his intereſt, for the benefit which he had received from his attendance in a long illneſs.

It was ſaid, that, when the Court was at Richmond, Queen Caroline had declared her intention to viſit him. This may have been only a careleſs effuſion, thought on no more: the report of ſuch notice, however, was ſoon in many mouths; and, if I do not forget or miſapprehend Savage's account, Pope, pretending to decline what was not yet offered, left his houſe for a time, not, I ſuppoſe, for any other reaſon than leſt he ſhould be thought to ſtay at home in expectation of an honour which would not be conferred. He was therefore angry at Swift, who repreſents him as "refuſing the viſits of a "Queen," becauſe he knew that what had never been offered had never been refuſed.

Beſide the general ſyſtem of morality, ſuppoſed to be contained in the "Eſſay on Man," it was his intention to write diſtinct poems upon the different duties or conditions of life; one of which is the Epiſtle to Lord Bathurſt (1733) on the "Uſe of "Riches,"

"Riches," a piece on which he declared great labour to have been beſtowed *.

Into this poem ſome hints are hiſtorically thrown, and ſome known characters are introduced, with others of which it is difficult to ſay how far they are real or fictitious; but the praiſe of Kyrl, the Man of Roſs, deſerves particular examination, who, after a long and pompous enumeration of his publick works and private charities, is ſaid to have diffuſed all thoſe bleſſings from *five hundred a-year*. Wonders are willingly told, and willingly heard. The truth is, that Kyrl was a man of known integrity and active benevolence, by whoſe ſolicitation the wealthy were perſuaded to pay contributions to his charitable ſchemes; this influence he obtained by an example of liberality exerted to the utmoſt extent of his power, and was thus enabled to give more than he had. This account Mr. Victor received from the miniſter of the place; and I have preſerved it, that the praiſe of a good man, being made more credible, may be more ſolid. Narrations of romantick and impracticable virtue will be read with wonder, but that which is unattainable is recommended in vain; that good may be endeavoured, it muſt be ſhewn to be poſſible.

This is the only piece in which the author has given a hint of his religion, by ridiculing the ceremony of burning the pope, and by mentioning with ſome indignation the inſcription on the Monument.

When this poem was firſt publiſhed, the dialogue, having no letters of direction, was perplexed and

* Spence.

 obſcure.

obſcure. Pope ſeems to have written with no very diſtinct idea: for he calls that an "Epiſtle to "Bathurſt," in which Bathurſt is introduced as ſpeaking.

He afterwards (1734) inſcribed to Lord Cobham his "Characters of Men," written with cloſe attention to the operatious of the mind and modifications of life. In this poem he has endeavoured to eſtabliſh and exemplify his favourite theory of the *ruling Paſſion*, by which he means an original direction of deſire to ſome particular object, an innate affection which gives all action a determinate and invariable tendency, and operates upon the whole ſyſtem of life, either openly, or more ſecretly by the intervention of ſome accidental or ſubordinate propenſion.

Of any paſſion, thus innate and irreſiſtible, the exiſtence may reaſonably be doubted. Human characters are by no means conſtant; men change by change of place, of fortune, of acquaintance; he who is at one time a lover of pleaſure, is at another a lover of money. Thoſe indeed who attain any excellence, commonly ſpend life in one purſuit; for excellence is not often gained upon eaſier terms. But to the particular ſpecies of excellence men are directed, not by an aſcendant planet or predominating humour, but by the firſt book which they read, ſome early converſation which they heard, or ſome accident which excited ardour and emulation.

It muſt at leaſt be allowed that this *ruling Paſſion*, antecedent to reaſon and obſervation, muſt have an

object independent on human contrivance; for there can be no natural desire of artificial good. No man therefore can be born, in the strict acceptation, a lover of money; for he may be born where money does not exist: nor can he be born, in a moral sense, a lover of his country; for society, politically regulated, is a state contradistinguished from a state of nature; and any attention to that coalition of interests which makes the happiness of a country, is possible only to those whom enquiry and reflection have enabled to comprehend it.

This doctrine is in itself pernicious as well as false: its tendency is to produce the belief of a kind of moral predestination, or over-ruling principle which cannot be resisted; he that admits it is prepared to comply with every desire that caprice or opportunity shall excite, and to flatter himself that he submits only to the lawful dominion of Nature, in obeying the resistless authority of his *ruling Passion*.

Pope has formed his theory with so little skill, that, in the examples by which he illustrates and confirms it, he has confounded passions, appetites, and habits.

To the "Characters of Men," he added soon after, in an Epistle supposed to have been addressed to Martha Blount, but which the last edition has taken from her, the "Characters of Women." This poem, which was laboured with great diligence, and in the author's opinion with great success, was neglected at its first publication, as the commentator supposes, because the publick was informed, by an advertisement, that it contained *no character drawn from the*

Life; an aſſertion which Pope probably did not expect nor wiſh to have been believed, and which he ſoon gave his readers ſufficient reaſon to diſtruſt, by telling them in a note that the work was imperfect, becauſe part of his ſubject was *Vice too high* to be yet expoſed.

The time however ſoon came, in which it was ſafe to diſplay the Dutcheſs of Marlborough under the name of *Atoſſa*; and her character was inſerted with no great honour to the writer's gratitude.

He publiſhed from time to time (between 1730 and 1740) Imitations of different poems of Horace, generally with his name, and once, as was ſuſpected, without it. What he was upon moral principles aſhamed to own, he ought to have ſuppreſſed. Of theſe pieces it is uſeleſs to ſettle the dates, as they had ſeldom much relation to the times, and perhaps had been long in his hands.

This mode of imitation, in which the antients are familiariſed, by adapting their ſentiments to modern topicks, by making Horace ſay of Shakſpeare what he originally ſaid of Ennius, and accommodating his ſatires on Pantolabus and Nomentanus to the flatterers and prodigals of our own time, was firſt practiſed in the reign of Charles the Second by Oldham and Rocheſter, at leaſt I remember no inſtances more antient. It is a kind of middle compoſition between tranſlation and original deſign, which pleaſes when the thoughts are unexpectedly applicable, and the parallels lucky. It ſeems to have been Pope's favourite amuſement; for he has carried it farther than any former poet.

He

He publiſhed likewiſe a revival, in ſmoother numbers, of Dr. Donne's Satires, which was recommended to him by the Duke of Shrewſbury and the Earl of Oxford. They made no great impreſſion on the publick. Pope ſeems to have known their imbecillity, and therefore ſuppreſſed them while he was yet contending to riſe in reputation, but ventured them when he thought their deficiencies more likely to be imputed to Donne than to himſelf.

The Epiſtle to Dr. Arbuthnot, which ſeems to be derived in its firſt deſign from Boileau's Addreſs *à ſon Eſprit*, was publiſhed in January 1735, about a month before the death of him to whom it is inſcribed. It is to be regretted, that either honour or pleaſure ſhould have been miſſed by Arbuthnot; a man eſtimable for his learning, amiable for his life, and venerable for his piety.

Arbuthnot was a man of great comprehenſion, ſkilful in his profeſſion, verſed in the ſciences, acquainted with antient literature, and able to animate his maſs of knowledge by a bright and active imagination; a ſcholar with great brilliance of wit; a wit, who, in the crowd of life, retained and diſcovered a noble ardour of religious zeal.

In this poem Pope ſeems to reckon with the publick. He vindicates himſelf from cenſures; and with dignity, rather than arrogance, enforces his own claims to kindneſs and reſpect.

Into this poem are interwoven ſeveral paragraphs which had been before printed as a fragment, and among them the ſatirical lines upon Addiſon, of which the laſt couplet has been twice corrected. It was at firſt,

Who would not ſmile if ſuch a man there be?
Who would not laugh if Addiſon were he?

Then,

Who would not grieve if ſuch man there be?
Who would not laugh if Addiſon were he?

At laſt it is,

Who but muſt laugh if ſuch a man there be?
Who would not weep if Atticus were he?

He was at this time at open war with Lord Hervey, who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf as a ſteady adherent to the Miniſtry; and, being offended with a contemptuous anſwer to one of his pamphlets *, had ſummoned Pulteney to a duel. Whether he or Pope made the firſt attack, perhaps, cannot now be eaſily known: he had written an invective againſt Pope, whom he calls, "Hard as thy heart, and as thy "birth obſcure;" and hints that his father was a *hatter*. To this Pope wrote a reply in verſe and proſe; the verſes are in this poem; and the proſe, though it was never ſent, is printed among his Letters, but to a cool reader of the preſent time exhibits nothing but tedious malignity.

His laſt Satires, of the general kind, were two Dialogues, named, from the year in which they were publiſhed, "Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-eight." In theſe poems many are praiſed and many reproached. Pope was then entangled in the oppoſition; a follower of the Prince of Wales, who dined at his houſe, and the friend of many who obſtructed and cenſured the conduct of the Miniſters. His political

* Intituled, "Sedition and Defamation diſplayed," 8vo. 1733. R.

partiality was too plainly ſhewn: he forgot the prudence with which he paſſed, in his earlier years, uninjured and unoffending, through much more violent conflicts of faction.

In the firſt Dialogue, having an opportunity of praiſing Allen of Bath, he aſked his leave to mention him as a man not illuſtrious by any merit of his anceſtors, and called him in his verſes "low-born "Allen." Men are ſeldom ſatisfied with praiſe introduced or followed by any mention of defect. Allen ſeems not to have taken any pleaſure in his epithet, which was afterwards ſoftened into "humble "Allen."

In the ſecond Dialogue he took ſome liberty with one of the Foxes, among others; which Fox, in a reply to Lyttelton, took an opportunity of repaying, by reproaching him with the friendſhip of a lampooner, who ſcattered his ink without fear or decency, and againſt whom he hoped the reſentment of the Legiſlature would quickly be diſcharged.

About this time Paul Whitehead, a ſmall poet, was ſummoned before the Lords for a poem called "Manners," together with Dodſley his publiſher. Whitehead, who hung looſe upon ſociety, ſculked and eſcaped; but Dodſley's ſhop and family made his appearance neceſſary. He was, however, ſoon diſmiſſed; and the whole proceſs was probably intended rather to intimidate Pope, than to puniſh Whitehead.

Pope never afterwards attempted to join the patriot with the poet, nor drew his pen upon ſtateſmen. That he deſiſted from his attempts of reformation is imputed, by his commentator, to his deſpair of

prevailing over the corruption of the time. He was not likely to have been ever of opinion, that the dread of his ſatire would countervail the love of power or of money; he pleaſed himſelf with being important and formidable, and gratified ſometimes his pride, and ſometimes his reſentment; till at laſt he began to think he ſhould be more ſafe, if he were leſs buſy.

The "Memoirs of Scriblerus," publiſhed about this time, extend only to the firſt book of a work projected in concert by Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, who uſed to meet in the time of Queen Anne, and denominated themſelves the "Scriblerus Club." Their purpoſe was to cenſure the abuſes of learning by a fictitious Life of an infatuated Scholar. They were diſperſed; the deſign was never completed, and Warburton laments its miſcarriage, as an event very diſaſtrous to polite letters.

If the whole may be eſtimated by this ſpecimen, which ſeems to be the production of Arbuthnot, with a few touches perhaps by Pope, the want of more will not be much lamented; for the follies which the writer ridicules are ſo little practiſed, that they are not known; nor can the ſatire be underſtood but by the learned: he raiſes phantoms of abſurdity, and then drives them away. He cures diſeaſes that were never felt.

For this reaſon this joint production of three great writers has never obtained any notice from mankind; it has been little read, or when read has been forgotten, as no man could be wiſer, better, or merrier, by remembering it.

The defign cannot boaft of much originality; for, befides its general refemblance to Don Quixote, there will be found in it particular imitations of the Hiftory of Mr. Ouffle.

Swift carried fo much of it into Ireland as fupplied him with hints for his Travels; and with thofe the world might have been contented, though the reft had been fuppreffed.

Pope had fought for images and fentiments in a region not known to have been explored by many other of the Englifh writers; he had confulted the modern writers of Latin poetry, a clafs of authors whom Boileau endeavoured to bring into contempt, and who are too generally neglected. Pope, however, was not afhamed of their acquaintance, nor ungrateful for the advantages which he might have derived from it. A fmall felection from the Italians, who wrote in Latin, had been publifhed at London, about the latter end of the laft century, by a man * who concealed his name, but whom his Preface fhews to have been qualified for his undertaking. This collection Pope amplified by more than half, and (1740) publifhed it in two volumes, but injurioufly omitted his predeceffor's preface. To thefe books, which had nothing but the mere text, no regard was paid, the authors were ftill neglected, and the editor was neither praifed nor cenfured.

He did not fink into idlenefs; he had planned a work, which he confidered as fubfequent to his "Effay on Man," of which he has given this account to Dr. Swift.

* Since difcovered to have been Atterbury, afterwards Bifhop of Rochefter. R.

"March

"March 25, 1736.

"If ever I write any more Epiſtles in verſe, one "of them ſhall be addreſſed to you. I have long "concerted it, and begun it; but I would make "what bears your name as finiſhed as my laſt work "ought to be, that is to ſay, more finiſhed than any "of the reſt. The ſubject is large, and will divide "into four Epiſtles, which naturally follow the 'Eſſay "on Man;' viz. 1. Of the Extent and Limits of "Human Reaſon and Science. 2. A view of the "uſeful and therefore attainable, and of the unuſeful "and therefore unattainable, Arts. 3. Of the Na-"ture, Ends, Application, and Uſe, of different "Capacities. 4. Of the Uſe of Learning, of the "Science, of the World, and of Wit. It will con-"clude with a ſatire againſt the Miſapplication of all "theſe, exemplified by Pictures, Characters, and "Examples."

This work in its full extent, being now afflicted with an aſthma, and finding the powers of life gradually declining, he had no longer courage to undertake; but, from the materials which he had provided, he added, at Warburton's requeſt, another book to the "Dunciad," of which the deſign is to ridicule ſuch ſtudies as are either hopeleſs or uſeleſs, as either purſue what is unattainable, or what, if it be attained, is of no uſe.

When this book was printed (1742) the laurel had been for ſome time upon the head of Cibber; a man whom it cannot be ſuppoſed that Pope could regard with much kindneſs or eſteem, though in one of the imitations of Horace he has liberally enough praiſed the "Careleſs Huſband." In the "Dunciad,"

among

among other worthlefs fcribblers, he had mentioned Cibber; who, in his "Apology," complains of the great Poet's unkindnefs as more injurious, "becaufe," fays he, "I never have offended him."

It might have been expected that Pope fhould have been, in fome degree, mollified by this fubmiffive gentlenefs, but no fuch confequence appeared. Though he condefcended to commend Cibber once, he mentioned him afterwards contemptuoufly in one of his fatires, and again in his Epiftle to Arbuthnot; and in the fourth book of the "Dunciad" attacked him with acrimony, to which the provocation is not eafily difcoverable. Perhaps he imagined that, in ridiculing the Laureat, he fatirized thofe by whom the laurel had been given, and gratified that ambitious petulance with which he affected to infult the great.

The feverity of this fatire left Cibber no longer any patience. He had confidence enough in his own powers to believe that he could difturb the quiet of his adverfary, and doubtlefs did not want inftigators, who, without any care about the victory, defired to amufe themfelves by looking on the conteft. He therefore gave the town a pamphlet, in which he declares his refolution from that time never to bear another blow without returning it, and to tire out his adverfary by perfeverance, if he cannot conquer him by ftrength.

The inceffant and unappeafable malignity of Pope he imputes to a very diftant caufe. After the "Three hours after Marriage" had been driven off the ftage, by the offence which the mummy and crocodile gave the audience, while the exploded

ſcene was yet freſh in memory, it happened that Cibber played Bayes in the Rehearſal; and, as it had been uſual to enliven the part by the mention of any recent theatrical tranſactions, he ſaid, that he once thought to have introduced his lovers diſguiſed in a Mummy and a Crocodile. "This," ſays he "was received with loud claps, which indicated "contempt of the play." Pope, who was behind the ſcenes, meeting him as he left the ſtage, attacked him, as he ſays, with all the virulence of a "Wit "out of his ſenſes;" to which he replied, "that he "would take no other notice of what was ſaid by ſo "particular a man, than to declare, that, as often "as he played that part, he would repeat the ſame "provocation."

He ſhews his opinion to be, that Pope was one of the authors of the play which he ſo zealouſly defended; and adds an idle ſtory of Pope's behaviour at a tavern.

The pamphlet was written with little power of thought or language, and, if ſuffered to remain without notice, would have been very ſoon forgotten. Pope had now been enough acquainted with human life to know, if his paſſion had not been too powerful for his underſtanding, that, from a contention like his with Cibber, the world ſeeks nothing but diverſion, which is given at the expence of the higher character. When Cibber lampooned Pope, curioſity was excited; what Pope would ſay of Cibber nobody enquired, but in hope that Pope's aſperity might betray his pain and leſſen his dignity.

He ſhould therefore have ſuffered the pamphlet to flutter and die, without confeſſing that it ſtung him.

The

The diſhonour of being ſhewn as Cibber's antagoniſt could never be compenſated by the victory. Cibber had nothing to loſe; when Pope had exhauſted all his malignity upon him, he would riſe in the eſteem both of his friends and his enemies. Silence only could have made him deſpicable; the blow which did not appear to be felt would have been ſtruck in vain.

But Pope's iraſcibility prevailed, and he reſolved to tell the whole Engliſh world that he was at war with Cibber; and, to ſhew that he thought him no common adverſary, he prepared no common vengeance; he publiſhed a new edition of the "Dunciad," in which he degraded Theobald from his painful pre-eminence, and enthroned Cibber in his ſtead. Unhappily the two heroes were of oppoſite characters, and Pope was unwilling to loſe what he had already written; he has therefore depraved his poem by giving to Cibber the old books, the old pedantry, and the ſluggiſh pertinacity of Theobald.

Pope was ignorant enough of his own intereſt, to make another change, and introduced Oſborne contending for the prize among the bookſellers. Oſborne was a man entirely deſtitute of ſhame, without ſenſe of any diſgrace but that of poverty. He told me, when he was doing that which raiſed Pope's reſentment, that he ſhould be put into the "Dunciad;" but he had the fate of "Caſſandra." I gave no credit to his prediction, till in time I ſaw it accompliſhed. The ſhafts of ſatire were directed equally in vain againſt Cibber and Oſborne; being repelled by the impenetrable impudence of one, and deadened by the impaſſive dulneſs of the other. Pope confeſſed

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

feſſed his own pain by his anger; but he gave no pain to thoſe who had provoked him. He was able to hurt none but himſelf; by transferring the ſame ridicule from one to another, he reduced himſelf to the inſignificance of his own magpie, who from his cage calls cuckold at a venture.

Cibber, according to his engagement, repaid the "Dunciad" with another pamphlet, which, Pope ſaid, "would be as good as a doſe of hartſhorn to "him;" but his tongue and his heart were at variance. I have heard Mr. Richardſon relate, that he attended his father the painter on a viſit, when one of Cibber's pamphlets came into the hands of Pope, who ſaid, "Theſe things are my diverſion." They ſat by him while he peruſed it, and ſaw his features writhing with anguiſh; and young Richardſon ſaid to his father, when they returned, that he hoped to be preſerved from ſuch diverſion as had been that day the lot of Pope.

From this time, finding his diſeaſes more oppreſſive, and his vital powers gradually declining, he no longer ſtrained his faculties with any original compoſition, nor propoſed any other employment for his remaining life than the reviſal and correction of his former works; in which he received advice and aſſiſtance from Warburton, whom he appears to have truſted and honoured in the higheſt degree.

He laid aſide his Epick Poem, perhaps without much loſs to mankind; for his hero was Brutus the Trojan, who, according to a ridiculous fiction, eſtabliſhed a colony in Britain. The ſubject therefore was of the fabulous age; the actors were a race upon whom imagination has been exhauſted, and attention

tion wearied, and to whom the mind will not eaſily be recalled, when it is invited in blank verſe, which Pope had adopted with great imprudence, and, I think, without due conſideration of the nature of our language. The ſketch is, at leaſt in part, preſerved by Ruffhead; by which it appears, that Pope was thoughtleſs enough to model the names of his heroes with terminations not conſiſtent with the time or country in which he places them.

He lingered through the next year; but perceived himſelf, as he expreſſes it, "going down the hill." He had for at leaſt five years been afflicted with an aſthma, and other diſorders, which his phyſicians were unable to relieve. Towards the end of his life he conſulted Dr. Thomſon, a man who had, by large promiſes, and free cenſures of the common practice of phyſick, forced himſelf up into ſudden reputation. Thomſon declared his diſtemper to be a dropſy, and evacuated part of the water by tincture of jalap; but confeſſed that his belly did not ſubſide. Thomſon had many enemies, and Pope was perſuaded to diſmiſs him.

While he was yet capable of amuſement and converſation, as he was one day ſitting in the air with Lord Bolingbroke and Lord Marchmont, he ſaw his favourite Martha Blount at the bottom of the terrace, and aſked Lord Bolingbroke to go and hand her up. Bolingbroke, not liking his errand, croſſed his legs and ſat ſtill; but Lord Marchmont, who was younger and leſs captious, waited on the lady, who, when he came to her, aſked, "What, is he not "dead yet?" She is ſaid to have neglected him, with ſhameful unkindneſs, in the latter time of his

decay;

decay; yet, of the little which he had to leave ſhe had a very great part. Their acquaintance began early; the life of each was pictured on the other's mind; their converſation therefore was endearing, for when they met, there was an immediate coalition of congenial notions. Perhaps he conſidered her unwillingneſs to approach the chamber of ſickneſs as female weakneſs, or human frailty; perhaps he was conſcious to himſelf of peeviſhneſs and impatience, or, though he was offended by her inattention, might yet conſider her merit as overbalancing her fault; and, if he had ſuffered his heart to be alienated from her, he could have found nothing that might fill her place; he could have only ſhrunk within himſelf; it was too late to transfer his confidence or fondneſs.

In May, 1744, his death was approaching *; on the ſixth, he was all day delirious, which he mentioned four days afterwards as a ſufficient humiliation of the vanity of man; he afterwards complained of ſeeing things as through a curtain, and in falſe colours, and one day, in the preſence of Dodſley, aſked what arm it was that came out from the wall. He ſaid that his greateſt inconvenience was inability to think.

Bolingbroke ſometimes wept over him in this ſtate of helpleſs decay; and being told by Spence, that Pope, at the intermiſſion of his deliriouſneſs, was always ſaying ſomething kind either of his preſent or abſent friends, and that his humanity ſeemed to have ſurvived his underſtanding, anſwered, "It has ſo." And added, "I never in my life knew a man that "had ſo tender a heart for his particular friends, or "more general friendſhip for mankind." At another

* Spence.

time

time he ſaid, " I have known Pope theſe thirty years, " and value myſelf more in his friendſhip than"— His grief then ſuppreſſed his voice.

Pope expreſſed undoubting confidence of a future ſtate. Being aſked by his friend Mr. Hooke, a papiſt, whether he would not die like his father and mother, and whether a prieſt ſhould not be called, he anſwered, " I do not think it eſſential, but it will be " very right; and I thank you for putting me in " mind of it."

In the morning, after the prieſt had given him the laſt ſacraments, he ſaid, " There is nothing that is " meritorious but virtue and friendſhip; and indeed " friendſhip itſelf is only a part of virtue."

He died in the evening of the thirtieth day of May, 1744, ſo placidly, that the attendants did not diſcern the exact time of his expiration. He was buried at Twickenham, near his father and mother, where a monument has been erected to him by his commentator, the Biſhop of Glouceſter.

He left the care of his papers to his executors; firſt to Lord Bolingbroke; and, if he ſhould not be living, to the Earl of Marchmont; undoubtedly expecting them to be proud of the truſt, and eager to extend his fame. But let no man dream of influence beyond his life. After a decent time, Dodſley the bookſeller went to ſolicit preference as the publiſher, and was told that the parcel had not been yet inſpected; and, whatever was the reaſon, the world has been diſappointed of what was " reſerved " for the next age."

He loſt, indeed, the favour of Bolingbroke by a kind of poſthumous offence. The political pam-

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phlet called "The Patriot King" had been put into his hands that he might procure the impreſſion of a very few copies, to be diſtributed, according to the author's direction, among his friends, and Pope aſſured him that no more had been printed than were allowed; but, ſoon after his death, the printer brought and reſigned a complete edition of fifteen hundred copies, which Pope had ordered him to print, and retain in ſecret. He kept, as was obſerved, his engagement to Pope better than Pope had kept it to his friend; and nothing was known of the tranſaction, till, upon the death of his employer, he thought himſelf obliged to deliver the books to the right owner, who, with great indignation, made a fire in his yard, and delivered the whole impreſſion to the flames.

Hitherto nothing had been done which was not naturally dictated by reſentment of violated faith; reſentment more acrimonious, as the violator had been more loved or more truſted. But here the anger might have ſtopped; the injury was private, and there was little danger from the example.

Bolingbroke, however, was not yet ſatisfied; his thirſt of vengeance excited him to blaſt the memory of the man over whom he had wept in his laſt ſtruggles; and he employed Mallet, another friend of Pope, to tell the tale to the publick, with all its aggravations. Warburton, whoſe heart was warm with his legacy, and tender by the recent ſeparation, thought it proper for him to interpoſe; and undertook, not indeed to vindicate the action, for breach of truſt has always ſomething criminal, but to extenuate it by an apology. Having advanced

what cannot be denied, that moral obliquity is made more or lefs excufable by the motives that produce it, he enquires what evil purpofe could have induced Pope to break his promife. He could not delight his vanity by ufurping the work, which, though not fold in fhops, had been fhewn to a number more than fufficient to preferve the author's claim; he could not gratify his avarice, for he could not fell his plunder till Bolingbroke was dead; and even then, if the copy was left to another, his fraud would be defeated, and if left to himfelf would be ufelefs.

Warburton therefore fuppofes, with great appearance of reafon, that the irregularity of his conduct proceeded wholly from his zeal for Bolingbroke, who might perhaps have deftroyed the pamphlet, which Pope thought it his duty to preferve, even without its author's approbation. To this apology an anfwer was written in "A Letter to the moft impudent "Man living."

He brought fome reproach upon his own memory by the petulant and contemptuous mention made in his will of Mr. Allen, and an affected repayment of his benefactions. Mrs. Blount, as the known friend and favourite of Pope, had been invited to the houfe of Allen, where fhe comported herfelf with fuch indecent arrogance, that fhe parted from Mrs. Allen in a ftate of irreconcileable diflike, and the door was for ever barred againft her. This exclufion fhe refented with fo much bitternefs as to refufe any legacy from Pope, unlefs he left the world with a difavowal of obligation to Allen. Having been long under her dominion, now tottering in the decline of

 life,

life, and unable to resist the violence of her temper, or perhaps, with the prejudice of a lover, persuaded that she had suffered improper treatment, he complied with her demand, and polluted his will with female resentment. Allen accepted the legacy, which he gave to the Hospital at Bath, observing that Pope was always a bad accomptant, and that, if to 150l. he had put a cipher more, he had come nearer to the truth *.

* This account of the difference between Pope and Mr. Allen is not so circumstantial as it was in Johnson's power to have made it. The particulars communicated to him concerning it he was too indolent to commit to writing: the business of this note is to supply his omissions.

Upon an invitation in which Mrs. Blount was included, Mr. Pope made a visit to Mr. Allen at Prior-park, and having occasion to go to Bristol for a few days, left Mrs. Blount behind him. In his absence Mrs. Blount, who was of the Romish persuasion, signified an inclination to go to the Popish chapel at Bath, and desired of Mr. Allen the use of his chariot for the purpose; but he, being at that time mayor of the city, suggested the impropriety of having his carriage seen at the door of a place of worship, to which as a magistrate he was at least restrained from giving a sanction, and might be required to suppress, and therefore desired to be excused. Mrs. Blount resented this refusal, and told Pope of it at his return, and so infected him with her rage that they both left the house abruptly.

An instance of the like negligence may be noted in his relation of Pope's love of painting, which differs much from the information I gave him on that head. A picture of Betterton, certainly copied from Kneller by Pope, Lord Mansfield once shewed me at Kenwood-house, adding, that it was the only one he ever finished, for that the weakness of his eyes was an obstruction to his use of the pencil. H.

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THE perſon of Pope is well known not to have been formed by the niceſt model. He has, in his account of the "Little Club," compared himſelf to a ſpider, and by another is deſcribed as protuberant behind and before. He is ſaid to have been beautiful in his infancy; but he was of a conſtitution originally feeble and weak; and, as bodies of a tender frame are eaſily diſtorted, his deformity was probably in part the effect of his application. His ſtature was ſo low, that, to bring him to a level with common tables, it was neceſſary to raiſe his ſeat. But his face was not diſpleaſing, and his eyes were animated and vivid.

By natural deformity, or accidental diſtortion, his vital functions were ſo much diſordered, that his life was a "long diſeaſe." His moſt frequent aſſailant was the headach, which he uſed to relieve by inhaling the ſteam of coffee, which he very frequently required.

Moſt of what can be told concerning his petty peculiarities was communicated by a female domeſtick of the Earl of Oxford, who knew him perhaps after the middle of life. He was then ſo weak as to ſtand in perpetual need of female attendance; extremely ſenſible of cold, ſo that he wore a kind of fur doublet, under a ſhirt of a very coarſe warm linen with fine ſleeves. When he roſe, he was inveſted in boddice made of ſtiff canvas, being ſcarcely able to hold himſelf erect till they were laced, and he then put on a flannel waiſtcoat. One ſide was contracted. His legs were ſo ſlender, that he en-

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larged their bulk with three pair of ſtockings, which were drawn on and off by the maid; for he was not able to dreſs or undreſs himſelf, and neither went to bed nor roſe without help. His weakneſs made it very difficult for him to be clean.

His hair had fallen almoſt all away; and he uſed to dine ſometimes with Lord Oxford, privately, in a velvet cap. His dreſs of ceremony was black, with a tie-wig, and a little ſword.

The indulgence and accommodation which his ſickneſs required, had taught him all the unpleaſing and unſocial qualities of a valetudinary man. He expected that every thing ſhould give way to his eaſe or humour, as a child, whoſe parents will not hear her cry, has an unreſiſted dominion in the nurſery.

C'eſt que l'enfant toûjours eſt homme,
C'eſt que l'homme eſt toûjours enfant.

When he wanted to ſleep he "nodded in company;" and once ſlumbered at his own table while the Prince of Wales was talking of poetry.

The reputation which his friendſhip gave procured him many invitations; but he was a very troubleſome inmate. He brought no ſervant, and had ſo many wants, that a numerous attendance was ſcarcely able to ſupply them. Wherever he was, he left no room for another, becauſe he exacted the attention, and employed the activity of the whole family. His errands were ſo frequent and frivolous, that the footmen in time avoided and neglected him; and the Earl of Oxford diſcharged ſome of the ſervants for their reſolute refuſal of his meſſages. The maids, when they had neglected their buſineſs, alledged that

they

they had been employed by Mr. Pope. One of his conſtant demands was of coffee in the night, and to the woman that waited on him in his chamber he was very burthenſome: but he was careful to recompenſe her want of ſleep; and Lord Oxford's ſervant declared, that in the houſe where her buſineſs was to anſwer his call, ſhe would not aſk for wages.

He had another fault, eaſily incident to thoſe who, ſuffering much pain, think themſelves entitled to what pleaſures they can ſnatch. He was too indulgent to his appetite: he loved meat highly ſeaſoned and of ſtrong taſte; and, at the intervals of the table, amuſed himſelf with biſcuits and dry conſerves. If he ſat down to a variety of diſhes, he would oppreſs his ſtomach with repletion; and though he ſeemed angry when a dram was offered him, did not forbear to drink it. His friends, who knew the avenues to his heart, pampered him with preſents of luxury, which he did not ſuffer to ſtand neglected. The death of great men is not always proportioned to the luſtre of their lives. Hannibal, ſays Juvenal, did not periſh by the javelin or the ſword; the ſlaughters of Cannæ were revenged by a ring. The death of Pope was imputed by ſome of his friends to a ſilver ſaucepan, in which it was his delight to heat potted lampreys.

That he loved too well to eat, is certain; but that his ſenſuality ſhortened his life will not be haſtily concluded, when it is remembered that a conformation ſo irregular laſted ſix and fifty years, notwithſtanding ſuch pertinacious diligence of ſtudy and meditation.

In all his intercourse with mankind, he had great delight in artifice, and endeavoured to attain all his purposes by indirect and unsuspected methods. "He "hardly drank tea without a stratagem." If, at the house of friends, he wanted any accommodation, he was not willing to ask for it in plain terms, but would mention it remotely as something convenient; though, when it was procured, he soon made it appear for whose sake it had been recommended. Thus he teized Lord Orrery till he obtained a screen. He practised his arts on such small occasions, that Lady Bolingbroke used to say, in a French phrase, that "he played the politician about cabbages and tur-"nips." His unjustifiable impression of the "Patriot "King," as it can be imputed to no particular motive, must have proceeded from his general habit of secrecy and cunning; he caught an opportunity of a sly trick, and pleased himself with the thought of outwitting Bolingbroke.

In familiar or convivial conversation, it does not appear that he excelled. He may be said to have resembled Dryden, as being not one that was distinguished by vivacity in company. It is remarkable, that, so near his time, so much should be known of what he has written, and so little of what he has said: traditional memory retains no sallies of raillery, nor sentences of observation; nothing either pointed or solid, either wise or merry. One apophthegm only stands upon record. When an objection, raised against his inscription for Shakspeare, was defended by the authority of "Patrick," he replied—"hor-"resco referens"—that "he would allow the "publisher of a Dictionary to know the meaning "of

"of a single word, but not of two words put together."

He was fretful and easily displeased, and allowed himself to be capriciously resentful. He would sometimes leave Lord Oxford silently, no one could tell why, and was to be courted back by more letters and messages than the footmen were willing to carry. The table was indeed infested by Lady Mary Wortley, who was the friend of Lady Oxford, and who, knowing his peevishness, could by no intreaties be restrained from contradicting him, till their disputes were sharpened to such asperity, that one or the other quitted the house.

He sometimes condescended to be jocular with servants or inferiors; but by no merriment, either of others or his own, was he ever seen excited to laughter.

Of his domestick character, frugality was a part eminently remarkable. Having determined not to be dependent, he determined not to be in want, and therefore wisely and magnanimously rejected all temptations to expence unsuitable to his fortune. This general care must be universally approved; but it sometimes appeared in petty artifices of parsimony, such as the practice of writing his compositions on the back of letters, as may be seen in the remaining copy of the "Iliad," by which perhaps in five years five shillings were saved; or in a niggardly reception of his friends, and scantiness of entertainment, as, when he had two guests in his house, he would set at supper a single pint upon the table; and, having himself taken two small glasses, would retire and say, "Gentlemen, I leave you to your wine." Yet

he tells his friends, that "he has a heart for all, a "house for all, and, whatever they may think, a "fortune for all."

He sometimes, however, made a splendid dinner, and is said to have wanted no part of the skill or elegance which such performances require. That this magnificence should be often displayed, that obstinate prudence with which he conducted his affairs would not permit; for his revenue, certain and casual, amounted only to about eight hundred pounds a year, of which however he declares himself able to assign one hundred to charity *.

Of this fortune, which, as it arose from publick approbation, was very honourably obtained, his imagination seems to have been too full: it would be hard to find a man, so well entitled to notice by his wit, that ever delighted so much in talking of his money. In his Letters, and in his poems, his garden and his grotto, his quincunx and his vines, or some hints of his opulence, are always to be found. The great topick of his ridicule is poverty; the crimes with which he reproaches his antagonists are their debts, their habitation in the Mint, and their want of a dinner. He seems to be of an opinion not very uncommon in the world, that to want money is to want every thing.

Next to the pleasure of contemplating his possessions, seems to be that of enumerating the men of high rank

* Part of it arose from an annuity of two hundred pounds a year, which he had purchased either of the last Duke of Buckinghamshire, or the Dutchess his mother, and which was charged on some estate of that family. The deed by which it was granted was some years in my custody. H.

with

with whom he was acquainted, and whofe notice he loudly proclaims not to have been obtained by any practices of meannefs or fervility; a boaft which was never denied to be true, and to which very few poets have ever afpired. Pope never fet genius to fale, he never flattered thofe whom he did not love, or praifed thofe whom he did not efteem. Savage however remarked, that he began a little to relax his dignity when he wrote a diftich for "his Highnefs's "dog."

His admiration of the Great feems to have increafed in the advance of life. He paffed over peers and ftatefmen to infcribe his "Iliad" to Congreve, with a magnanimity of which the praife had been complete, had his friend's virtue been equal to his wit. Why he was chofen for fo great an honour, it is not now poffible to know; there is no trace in literary hiftory of any particular intimacy between them. The name of Congreve appears in the Letters among thofe of his other friends, but without any obfervable diftinction or confequence.

To his latter works, however, he took care to annex names dignified with titles, but was not very happy in his choice: for, except Lord Bathurft, none of his noble friends were fuch as that a good man would wifh to have his intimacy with them known to pofterity: he can derive little honour from the notice of Cobham, Burlington, or Bolingbroke.

Of his focial qualities, if an eftimate be made from his Letters, an opinion too favourable cannot eafily be formed; they exhibit a perpetual and unclouded effulgence of general benevolence, and particular fondnefs. There is nothing but liberality, gratitude,

gratitude, conſtancy, and tenderneſs. It has been ſo long ſaid as to be commonly believed, that the true characters of men may be found in their Letters, and that he who writes to his friend lays his heart open before him. But the truth is, that ſuch were the ſimple friendſhips of the "Golden Age," and are now the friendſhips only of children. Very few can boaſt of hearts which they dare lay open to themſelves, and of which, by whatever accident expoſed, they do not ſhun a diſtinct and continued view; and, certainly, what we hide from ourſelves we do not ſhew to our friends. There is, indeed, no tranſaction which offers ſtronger temptations to fallacy and ſophiſtication than epiſtolary intercourſe. In the eagerneſs of converſation the firſt emotions of the mind often burſt out before they are conſidered; in the tumult of buſineſs, intereſt and paſſion have their genuine effect; but a friendly Letter is a calm and deliberate performance in the cool of leiſure, in the ſtillneſs of ſolitude, and ſurely no man ſits down to depreciate by deſign his own character.

Friendſhip has no tendency to ſecure veracity; for by whom can a man ſo much wiſh to be thought better than he is, as by him whoſe kindneſs he deſires to gain or keep? Even in writing to the world there is leſs conſtraint; the author is not confronted with his reader, and takes his chance of approbation among the different diſpoſitions of mankind; but a Letter is addreſſed to a ſingle mind, of which the prejudices and partialities are known; and muſt therefore pleaſe, if not by favouring them, by forbearing to oppoſe them.

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To charge thofe favourable reprefentations, which men give of their own minds, with the guilt of hypocritical falfehood, would fhew more feverity than knowledge. The writer commonly believes himfelf. Almoft every man's thoughts, while they are general, are right; and moft hearts are pure, while temptation is away. It is eafy to awaken generous fentiments in privacy; to defpife death when there is no danger; to glow with benevolence when there is nothing to be given. While fuch ideas are formed they are felt; and felf-love does not fufpect the gleam of virtue to be the meteor of fancy.

If the Letters of Pope are confidered merely as compofitions, they feem to be premeditated and artificial. It is one thing to write, becaufe there is fomething which the mind wifhes to difcharge; and another, to folicit the imagination, becaufe ceremony or vanity requires fomething to be written. Pope confeffes his early Letters to be vitiated with *affectation and ambition:* to know whether he difentangled himfelf from thefe perverters of epiftolary integrity, his book and his life muft be fet in comparifon.

One of his favourite topicks is contempt of his own poetry. For this, if it had been real, he would deferve no commendation; and in this he was certainly not fincere, for his high value of himfelf was fufficiently obferved; and of what could he be proud but of his poetry? He writes, he fays, when "he "has juft nothing elfe to do;" yet Swift complains that he was never at leifure for converfation, becaufe he "had always fome poetical fcheme in his head." It was punctually required that his writing box fhould

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be ſet upon his bed before he roſe; and Lord Oxford's domeſtick related, that, in the dreadful winter of Forty, ſhe was called from her bed by him four times in one night, to ſupply him with paper, leſt he ſhould loſe a thought.

He pretends inſenſibility to cenſure and criticiſm, though it was obſerved by all who knew him that every pamphlet diſturbed his quiet, and that his extreme irritability laid him open to perpetual vexation; but he wiſhed to deſpiſe his criticks, and therefore hoped that he did deſpiſe them.

As he happened to live in two reigns when the Court paid little attention to poetry, he nurſed in his mind a fooliſh diſeſteem of Kings, and proclaims that "he never ſees Courts." Yet a little regard ſhewn him by the Prince of Wales melted his obduracy; and he had not much to ſay when he was aſked by his Royal Highneſs, "How he could love a Prince "while he diſliked Kings?"

He very frequently profeſſes contempt of the world, and repreſents himſelf as looking on mankind, ſometimes with gay indifference, as on emmets of a hillock, below his ſerious attention; and ſometimes with gloomy indignation, as on monſters more worthy of hatred than of pity. Theſe were diſpoſitions apparently counterfeited. How could he deſpiſe thoſe whom he lived by pleaſing, and on whoſe approbation his eſteem of himſelf was ſuperſtructed? Why ſhould he hate thoſe to whoſe favour he owed his honour and his eaſe? Of things that terminate in human life, the world is the proper judge; to deſpiſe its ſentence, if it were poſſible, is not juſt; and if it were juſt, is not poſſible. Pope was far enough from this

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unreaſonable temper; he was ſufficiently *a fool to Fame*, and his fault was, that he pretended to neglect it. His levity and his ſullenneſs were only in his Letters; he paſſed through common life, ſometimes vexed, and ſometimes pleaſed, with the natural emotions of common men.

His ſcorn of the Great is repeated too often to be real; no man thinks much of that which he deſpiſes; and as falſehood is always in danger of inconſiſtency, he makes it his boaſt at another time that he lives among them.

It is evident that his own importance ſwells often in his mind. He is afraid of writing, leſt the clerks of the Poſt-office ſhould know his ſecrets; he has many enemies; he conſiders himſelf as ſurrounded by univerſal jealouſy: "after many deaths, and many "diſperſions, two or three of us" ſays he, "may "ſtill be brought together, not to plot, but to di-"vert ourſelves, and the world too, if it pleaſes;" and they can live together, and "ſhew what friends "wits may be, in ſpite of all the fools in the world." All this while it was likely that the clerks did not know his hand; he certainly had no more enemies than a publick character like his inevitably excites; and with what degree of friendſhip the wits might live, very few were ſo much fools as ever to enquire.

Some part of this pretended diſcontent he learned from Swift, and expreſſes it, I think, moſt frequently in his correſpondence with him. Swift's reſentment was unreaſonable, but it was ſincere; Pope's was the mere mimickry of his friend, a fictitious part which he began to play before it became him. When he

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was only twenty-five years old, he related that "a "glut of ſtudy and retirement had thrown him on "the world," and that there was danger leſt "a glut "of the world ſhould throw him back upon ſtudy "and retirement." To this Swift anſwered with great propriety, that Pope had not yet acted or ſuffered enough in the world to have become weary of it. And, indeed, it muſt have been ſome very powerful reaſon that can drive back to ſolitude him who has once enjoyed the pleaſures of ſociety.

In the Letters both of Swift and Pope there appears ſuch narrowneſs of mind, as makes them inſenſible of any excellence that has not ſome affinity with their own, and confines their eſteem and approbation to ſo ſmall a number, that whoever ſhould form his opinion of their age from their repreſentation, would ſuppoſe them to have lived amidſt ignorance and barbarity, unable to find among their contemporaries either virtue or intelligence, and perſecuted by thoſe that could not underſtand them.

When Pope murmurs at the world, when he profeſſes contempt of fame, when he ſpeaks of riches and poverty, of ſucceſs and diſappointment, with negligent indifference, he certainly does not expreſs his habitual and ſettled reſentments, but either wilfully diſguiſes his own character, or, what is more likely, inveſts himſelf with temporary qualities, and ſallies out in the colours of the preſent moment. His hopes and fears, his joys and ſorrows, acted ſtrongly upon his mind; and, if he differed from others, it was not by careleſſneſs; he was irritable and reſentful; his malignity to Philips, whom he had firſt made ridiculous, and then hated for being angry, continued

continued too long. Of his vain deſire to make Bentley contemptible, I never heard any adequate reaſon. He was ſometimes wanton in his attacks; and, before Chandos, Lady Wortley, and Hill, was mean in his retreat.

The virtues which ſeem to have had moſt of his affection were liberality and fidelity of friendſhip, in which it does not appear that he was other than he deſcribes himſelf. His fortune did not ſuffer his charity to be ſplendid and conſpicuous; but he aſſiſted Dodſley with a hundred pounds, that he might open a ſhop; and, of the ſubſcription of forty pounds a year that he raiſed for Savage, twenty were paid by himſelf. He was accuſed of loving money; but his love was eagerneſs to gain, not ſolicitude to keep it.

In the duties of friendſhip he was zealous and conſtant; his early maturity of mind commonly united him with men older than himſelf; and therefore, without attaining any conſiderable length of life, he ſaw many companions of his youth ſink into the grave; but it does not appear that he loſt a ſingle friend by coldneſs or by injury; thoſe who loved him once, continued their kindneſs. His ungrateful mention of Allen in his will, was the effect of his adherence to one whom he had known much longer, and whom he naturally loved with greater fondneſs. His violation of the truſt repoſed in him by Bolingbroke could have no motive inconſiſtent with the warmeſt affection; he either thought the action ſo near to indifferent that he forgot it, or ſo laudable that he expected his friend to approve it.

It was reported, with ſuch confidence as almoſt to enforce belief, that in the papers intruſted to his executors was found a defamatory Life of Swift, which he had prepared as an inſtrument of vengeance, to be uſed if any provocation ſhould be ever given. About this I enquired of the Earl of Marchmont, who aſſured me that no ſuch piece was among his remains.

The religion in which he lived and died was that of the Church of Rome, to which in his correſpondence with Racine he profeſſes himſelf a ſincere adherent. That he was not ſcrupulouſly pious in ſome part of his life, is known by many idle and indecent applications of ſentences taken from the Scriptures; a mode of merriment which a good man dreads for its profaneneſs, and a witty man diſdains for its eaſineſs and vulgarity. But to whatever levities he has been betrayed, it does not appear that his principles were ever corrupted, or that he ever loſt his belief of Revelation. The poſitions which he tranſmitted from Bolingbroke he ſeems not to have underſtood, and was pleaſed with an interpretation that made them orthodox.

A man of ſuch exalted ſuperiority, and ſo little moderation, would naturally have all his delinquencies obſerved and aggravated: thoſe who could not deny that he was excellent, would rejoice to find that he was not perfect.

Perhaps it may be imputed to the unwillingneſs with which the ſame man is allowed to poſſeſs many advantages, that his learning has been depreciated. He certainly was, in his early life, a man of great literary

terary curiosity; and, when he wrote his "Essay on "Criticism," had, for his age, a very wide acquaintance with books. When he entered into the living world, it seems to have happened to him as to many others, that he was less attentive to dead masters; he studied in the academy of Paracelsus, and made the universe his favourite volume. He gathered his notions fresh from reality, not from the copies of authors, but the originals of nature. Yet there is no reason to believe that literature ever lost his esteem; he always professed to love reading; and Dobson, who spent some time at his house translating his "Essay on Man," when I asked him what learning he found him to possess, answered, "More "than I expected." His frequent references to history, his allusions to various kinds of knowledge, and his images selected from art and nature, with his observations on the operations of the mind and the modes of life, shew an intelligence perpetually on the wing, excursive, vigorous, and diligent, eager to pursue knowledge, and attentive to retain it.

From this curiosity arose the desire of travelling, to which he alludes in his verses to Jervas, and which, though he never found an opportunity to gratify it, did not leave him till his life declined.

Of his intellectual character, the constituent and fundamental principle was good sense, a prompt and intuitive perception of consonance and propriety. He saw immediately, of his own conceptions, what was to be chosen, and what to be rejected; and, in the works of others, what was to be shunned, and what was to be copied.

But good ſenſe alone is a ſedate and quieſcent quality, which manages its poſſeſſions well, but does not increaſe them; it collects few materials for its own operations, and preſerves ſafety, but never gains ſupremacy. Pope had likewiſe genius; a mind active, ambitious, and adventurous, always inveſtigating, always aſpiring; in its wideſt ſearches ſtill longing to go forward, in its higheſt flights ſtill wiſhing to be higher; always imagining ſomething greater than it knows, always endeavouring more than it can do.

To aſſiſt theſe powers, he is ſaid to have had great ſtrength and exactneſs of memory. That which he had heard or read was not eaſily loſt; and he had before him not only what his own meditations ſuggeſted, but what he had found in other writers that might be accommodated to his preſent purpoſe.

Theſe benefits of nature he improved by inceſſant and unwearied diligence; he had recourſe to every ſource of intelligence, and loſt no opportunity of information; he conſulted the living as well as the dead; he read his compoſitions to his friends, and was never content with mediocrity when excellence could be attained. He conſidered poetry as the buſineſs of his life; and, however he might ſeem to lament his occupation, he followed it with conſtancy; to make verſes was his firſt labour, and to mend them was his laſt.

From his attention to poetry he was never diverted. If converſation offered any thing that could be improved, he committed it to paper; if a thought, or perhaps an expreſſion more happy than was common,

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rose to his mind, he was careful to write it; an independent distich was preserved for an opportunity of insertion; and some little fragments have been found containing lines, or parts of lines, to be wrought upon at some other time.

He was one of those few whose labour is their pleasure: he was never elevated to negligence, nor wearied to impatience; he never passed a fault unamended by indifference, nor quitted it by despair. He laboured his works first to gain reputation, and afterwards to keep it.

Of composition there are different methods. Some employ at once memory and invention, and, with little intermediate use of the pen, form and polish large masses by continued meditation, and write their productions only when, in their own opinion, they have completed them. It is related of Virgil, that his custom was to pour out a great number of verses in the morning, and pass the day in retrenching exuberances and correcting inaccuracies. The method of Pope, as may be collected from his translation, was to write his first thoughts in his first words, and gradually to amplify, decorate, rectify, and refine them.

With such faculties, and such dispositions, he excelled every other writer in poetical prudence: he wrote in such a manner as might expose him to few hazards. He used almost always the same fabrick of verse; and, indeed, by those few essays which he made of any other, he did not enlarge his reputation. Of this uniformity the certain consequence was readiness and dexterity. By perpetual practice, language had, in his mind, a systematical arrangement; having always

the ſame uſe for words, he had words ſo ſelected and combined as to be ready at his call. This increaſe of facility he confeſſed himſelf to have perceived in the progreſs of his tranſlation.

But what was yet of more importance, his effuſions were always voluntary, and his ſubjects choſen by himſelf. His independence ſecured him from drudging at a taſk, and labouring upon a barren topick: he never exchanged praiſe for money, nor opened a ſhop of condolence or congratulation. His poems, therefore, were ſcarcely ever temporary. He ſuffered coronations and royal marriages to paſs without a ſong; and derived no opportunities from recent events, nor any popularity from the accidental diſpoſition of his readers. He was never reduced to the neceſſity of ſoliciting the ſun to ſhine upon a birth-day, of calling the Graces and Virtues to a wedding, or of ſaying what multitudes have ſaid before him. When he could produce nothing new, he was at liberty to be ſilent.

His publications were for the ſame reaſon never haſty. He is ſaid to have ſent nothing to the preſs till it had lain two years under his inſpection: it is at leaſt certain, that he ventured nothing without nice examination. He ſuffered the tumult of imagination to ſubſide, and the novelties of invention to grow familiar. He knew that the mind is always enamoured of its own productions, and did not truſt his firſt fondneſs. He conſulted his friends, and liſtened with great willingneſs to criticiſm; and, what was of more importance, he conſulted himſelf, and let nothing paſs againſt his own judgement.

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He professed to have learned his poetry from Dryden, whom, whenever an opportunity was presented, he praised through his whole life with unvaried liberality; and perhaps his character may receive some illustration, if he be compared with his master.

Integrity of understanding and nicety of discernment were not allotted in a less proportion to Dryden than to Pope. The rectitude of Dryden's mind was sufficiently shewn by the dismission of his poetical prejudices, and the rejection of unnatural thoughts and rugged numbers. But Dryden never desired to apply all the judgement that he had. He wrote, and professed to write, merely for the people; and when he pleased others, he contented himself. He spent no time in struggles to rouse latent powers; he never attempted to make that better which was already good, nor often to mend what he must have known to be faulty. He wrote, as he tells us, with very little consideration; when occasion or necessity called upon him, he poured out what the present moment happened to supply, and, when once it had passed the press, ejected it from his mind; for, when he had no pecuniary interest, he had no further solicitude.

Pope was not content to satisfy; he desired to excel, and therefore always endeavoured to do his best; he did not court the candour, but dared the judgement, of his reader, and, expecting no indulgence from others, he shewed none to himself. He examined lines and words with minute and punctilious observation, and retouched every part with indefatigable diligence, till he had left nothing to be forgiven.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S ...

For this reaſon he kept his pieces very long in his hands, while he conſidered and reconſidered them. The only poems which can be ſuppoſed to have been written with ſuch regard to the times as might haſten their publication, were the two ſatires of "Thirty-"eight;" of which Dodſley told me, that they were brought to him by the author, that they might be fairly copied. "Almoſt every line," he ſaid, "was "then written twice over; I gave him a clean tran-"ſcript, which he ſent ſome time afterwards to me "for the preſs, with almoſt every line written twice "over a ſecond time."

His declaration, that his care for his works ceaſed at their publication, was not ſtrictly true. His parental attention never abandoned them; what he found amiſs in the firſt edition, he ſilently corrected in thoſe that followed. He appears to have reviſed the "Iliad," and freed it from ſome of its imperfections; and the "Eſſay on Criticiſm" received many improvements after its firſt appearance. It will ſeldom be found that he altered without adding clearneſs, elegance, or vigour. Pope had perhaps the judgement of Dryden; but Dryden certainly wanted the diligence of Pope.

In acquired knowledge, the ſuperiority muſt be allowed to Dryden, whoſe education was more ſcholaſtick, and who before he became an author had been allowed more time for ſtudy, with better means of information. His mind has a larger range, and he collects his images and illuſtrations from a more extenſive circumference of ſcience. Dryden knew more of man in his general nature, and Pope in his local manners. The notions of Dryden were formed by

by comprehenſive ſpeculation; and thoſe of Pope by minute attention. There is more dignity in the knowledge of Dryden, and more certainty in that of Pope.

Poetry was not the ſole praiſe of either; for both excelled likewiſe in proſe; but Pope did not borrow his proſe from his predeceſſor. The ſtyle of Dryden is capricious and varied; that of Pope is cautious and uniform. Dryden obſerves the motions of his own mind; Pope conſtrains his mind to his own rules of compoſition. Dryden is ſometimes vehement and rapid; Pope is always ſmooth, uniform, and gentle. Dryden's page is a natural field, riſing into inequalities, and diverſified by the varied exuberance of abundant vegetation; Pope's is a velvet lawn, ſhaven by the ſcythe, and leveled by the roller.

Of genius, that power which conſtitutes a poet; that quality without which judgement is cold, and knowledge is inert; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates; the ſuperiority muſt, with ſome heſitation, be allowed to Dryden. It is not to be inferred, that of this poetical vigour Pope had only a little, becauſe Dryden had more; for every other writer ſince Milton muſt give place to Pope; and even of Dryden it muſt be ſaid, that, if he has brighter paragraphs, he has not better poems. Dryden's performances were always haſty, either excited by ſome external occaſion, or extorted by domeſtick neceſſity; he compoſed without conſideration, and publiſhed without correction. What his mind could ſupply at call, or gather in one excurſion, was all that he ſought, and all that he gave. The dilatory caution of Pope enabled him to condenſe his ſentiments, to multiply his images, and to

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accumulate all that ſtudy might produce, or chance might ſupply. If the flights of Dryden therefore are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and conſtant. Dryden often ſurpaſſes expectation, and Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent aſtoniſhment, and Pope with perpetual delight.

This parallel will, I hope, when it is well conſidered, be found juſt; and if the reader ſhould ſuſpect me, as I ſuſpect myſelf, of ſome partial fondneſs for the memory of Dryden, let him not too haſtily condemn me; for meditation and enquiry may, perhaps, ſhew him the reaſonableneſs of my determination.

THE Works of Pope are now to be diſtinctly examined, not ſo much with attention to ſlight faults or petty beauties, as to the general character and effect of each performance.

It ſeems natural for a young poet to initiate himſelf by Paſtorals, which, not profeſſing to imitate real life, require no experience; and, exhibiting only the ſimple operation of unmingled paſſions, admit no ſubtle reaſoning or deep enquiry. Pope's paſtorals are not however compoſed but with cloſe thought; they have reference to the times of the day, the ſeaſons of the year, and the periods of human life. The laſt, that which turns the attention upon age and death, was the author's favourite. To tell of diſappointment and miſery, to thicken the darkneſs of futurity, and perplex the labyrinth of uncer-

uncertainty, has been always a delicious employment of the poets. His preference was probably juſt. I wiſh, however, that his fondneſs had not overlooked a line in which the *Zephyrs* are made *to lament in ſilence*.

To charge theſe paſtorals with want of invention, is to require what was never intended. The imitations are ſo ambitiouſly frequent, that the writer evidently means rather to ſhew his literature than his wit. It is ſurely ſufficient for an author of ſixteen, not only to be able to copy the poems of antiquity with judicious ſelection, but to have obtained ſufficient power of language, and ſkill in metre, to exhibit a ſeries of verſification, which had in Engliſh poetry no precedent, nor has ſince had an imitation.

The deſign of "Windſor Foreſt" is evidently derived from "Cooper's Hill," with ſome attention to Waller's poem on "The Park;" but Pope cannot be denied to excel his maſters in variety and elegance, and the art of interchanging deſcription, narrative, and morality. The objection made by Dennis is the want of plan, of a regular ſubordination of parts terminating in the principal and original deſign. There is this want in moſt deſcriptive poems, becauſe as the ſcenes, which they muſt exhibit ſucceſſively, are all ſubſiſting at the ſame time, the order in which they are ſhewn muſt by neceſſity be arbitrary, and more is not to be expected from the laſt part than from the firſt. The attention, therefore, which cannot be detained by ſuſpenſe, muſt be excited by diverſity, ſuch as his poem offers to its reader.

But the deſire of diverſity may be too much indulged; the parts of "Windſor Foreſt" which de-

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ferve leaft praife, are thofe which were added to enliven the ftillnefs of the fcene, the appearance of Father Thames, and the transformation of *Lodona.* Addifon had in his "Campaign" derided the Rivers that "rife from their oozy beds" to tell ftories of heroes; and it is therefore ftrange that Pope fhould adopt a fiction not only unnatural but lately cenfured. The ftory of *Lodona* is told with fweetnefs; but a new metamorphofis is a ready and puerile expedient; nothing is eafier than to tell how a flower was once a blooming virgin, or a rock an obdurate tyrant.

The "Temple of Fame" has, as Steele warmly declared, "a thoufand beauties." Every part is fplendid; there is great luxuriance of ornaments; the original vifion of Chaucer was never denied to be much improved; the allegory is very fkilfully continued, the imagery is properly felected, and learnedly difplayed: yet, with all this comprehenfion of excellence, as its fcene is laid in remote ages, and its fentiments, if the concluding paragraph be excepted, have little relation to general manners or common life, it never obtained much notice, but is turned filently over, and feldom quoted or mentioned with either praife or blame.

That the "Meffiah" excels the "Pollio" is no great praife, if it be confidered from what original the improvements are derived.

The "Verfes on the unfortunate Lady" have drawn much attention by the illaudable fingularity of treating fuicide with refpect; and they muft be allowed to be written in fome parts with vigorous animation, and in others with gentle tendernefs; nor has Pope produced any poem in which the fenfe predominates

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more over the diction. But the tale is not ſkilfully told; it is not eaſy to diſcover the character of either the Lady or her Guardian. Hiſtory relates that ſhe was about to diſparage herſelf by a marriage with an inferior; Pope praiſes her for the dignity of ambition, and yet condemns the uncle to deteſtation for his pride; the ambitious love of a niece may be oppoſed by the intereſt, malice, or envy of an uncle, but never by his pride. On ſuch an occaſion a poet may be allowed to be obſcure, but inconſiſtency never can be right*.

The "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day" was undertaken at the deſire of Steele: in this the author is generally confeſſed to have miſcarried, yet he has miſcarried only as compared with Dryden; for he has far outgone other competitors. Dryden's plan is better choſen; hiſtory will always take ſtronger hold of the attention than fable: the paſſions excited by Dryden are the pleaſures and pains of real life, the ſcene of Pope is laid in imaginary exiſtence; Pope is read with calm acquieſcence, Dryden with turbulent de-

* The account herein before given of this lady and her cataſtrophe, cited by Johnſon from Ruffhead with a kind of acquieſcence in the truth thereof, ſeems no other than might have been extracted from the verſes themſelves. I have in my poſſeſſion a letter to Dr. Johnſon, containing the name of the lady; and a reference to a gentleman well known in the literary world for her hiſtory. Him I have ſeen; and, from a memorandum of ſome particulars to the purpoſe communicated to him by a lady of quality, he informs me, that the unfortunate lady's name was Withinbury, corruptly pronounced Winbury; that ſhe was in love with Pope, and would have married him; that her guardian, though ſhe was deformed in her perſon, looking upon ſuch a match as beneath her, ſent her to a convent; and that a nooſe, and not a ſword, put an end to her life. H.

light; Pope hangs upon the ear, and Dryden finds the paſſes of the mind.

Both the odes want the eſſential conſtituent of metrical compoſitions, the ſtated recurrence of ſettled numbers. It may be alledged, that Pindar is ſaid by Horace to have written *numeris lege ſolutis:* but as no ſuch lax performances have been tranſmitted to us, the meaning of that expreſſion cannot be fixed; and perhaps the like return might properly be made to a modern Pindariſt, as Mr. Cobb received from Bentley, who, when he found his criticiſms upon a Greek Exerciſe, which Cobb had preſented, refuted one after another by Pindar's authority, cried out at laſt, "Pindar was a bold fellow, but thou art an impudent one."

If Pope's ode be particularly inſpected, it will be found that the firſt ſtanza conſiſts of ſounds well choſen indeed, but only ſounds.

The ſecond conſiſts of hyperbolical commonplaces, eaſily to be found, and perhaps without much difficulty to be as well expreſſed.

In the third, however, there are numbers, images, harmony, and vigour, not unworthy the antagoniſt of Dryden. Had all been like this—but every part cannot be the beſt.

The next ſtanzas place and detain us in the dark and diſmal regions of mythology, where neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor ſorrow, can be found: the poet however faithfully attends us; we have all that can be performed by elegance of diction, or ſweetneſs of verſification; but what can form avail without better matter?

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The laſt ſtanza recurs again to common-places. The concluſion is too evidently modelled by that of Dryden; and it may be remarked that both end with the ſame fault; the compariſon of each is literal on one ſide, and metaphorical on the other.

Poets do not always expreſs their own thoughts: Pope, with all this labour in the praiſe of Muſick, was ignorant of its principles, and inſenſible of its effects.

One of his greateſt, though of his earlieſt works, is the "Eſſay on Criticiſm," which, if he had written nothing elſe, would have placed him among the firſt criticks and the firſt poets, as it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embelliſh or dignify didactick compoſition, ſelection of matter, novelty of arrangement, juſtneſs of precept, ſplendour of illuſtration, and propriety of digreſſion. I know not whether it be pleaſing to conſider that he produced this piece at twenty, and never afterwards excelled it: he that delights himſelf with obſerving that ſuch powers may be ſoon attained, cannot but grieve to think that life was ever after at a ſtand.

To mention the particular beauties of the Eſſay would be unprofitably tedious: but I cannot forbear to obſerve, that the compariſon of a ſtudent's progreſs in the ſciences with the journey of a traveller in the Alps, is perhaps the beſt that Engliſh poetry can ſhew. A ſimile, to be perfect, muſt both illuſtrate and ennoble the ſubject; muſt ſhew it to the underſtanding in a clearer view, and diſplay it to the fancy with greater dignity; but either of theſe qualities may be ſufficient to recommend it. In di-

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dactick poetry, of which the great purpose is instruction, a simile may be praised which illustrates, though it does not ennoble; in heroicks, that may be admitted which ennobles, though it does not illustrate. That it may be complete, it is required to exhibit, independently of its references, a pleasing image; for a simile is said to be a short episode. To this antiquity was so attentive, that circumstances were sometimes added, which, having no parallels, served only to fill the imagination, and produced what Perrault ludicrously called "comparisons with a long "tail." In their similies the greatest writers have sometimes failed; the ship-race, compared with the chariot-race, is neither illustrated nor aggrandised: land and water make all the difference: when Apollo, running after Daphne, is likened to a greyhound chasing a hare, there is nothing gained; the ideas of pursuit and flight are too plain to be made plainer; and a god and the daughter of a god are not represented much to their advantage by a hare and dog. The simile of the Alps has no useless parts, yet affords a striking picture by itself; it makes the foregoing position better understood, and enables it to take faster hold on the attention; it assists the apprehension, and elevates the fancy.

Let me likewise dwell a little on the celebrated paragraph, in which it is directed that "the sound "should seem an echo to the sense;" a precept which Pope is allowed to have observed beyond any other English poet.

This notion of representative metre, and the desire of discovering frequent adaptations of the sound to the sense, have produced, in my opinion, many

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wild conceits and imaginary beauties. All that can furniſh this repreſentation are the ſounds of the words conſidered ſingly, and the time in which they are pronounced. Every language has ſome words framed to exhibit the noiſes which they expreſs, as *thump*, *rattle*, *growl*, *hiſs*. Theſe however are but few, and the poet cannot make them more, nor can they be of any uſe but when ſound is to be mentioned. The time of pronunciation was in the dactylick meaſures of the learned languages capable of conſiderable variety; but that variety could be accommodated only to motion or duration, and different degrees of motion were perhaps expreſſed by verſes rapid or ſlow, without much attention of the writer, when the image had full poſſeſſion of his fancy: but our language having little flexibility, our verſes can differ very little in their cadence. The fancied reſemblances, I fear, ariſe ſometimes merely from the ambiguity of words; there is ſuppoſed to be ſome relation between a *ſoft* line and *ſoft* couch, or between *hard* ſyllables and *hard* fortune.

Motion, however, may be in ſome ſort exemplified; and yet it may be ſuſpected that in ſuch reſemblances the mind often governs the ear, and the ſounds are eſtimated by their meaning. One of their moſt ſucceſsful attempts has been to deſcribe the labour of Siſyphus:

With many a weary ſtep, and many a groan,
Up a high hill he heaves a huge round ſtone;
The huge round ſtone, reſulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and ſmokes along the ground.

Who does not perceive the ſtone to move ſlowly upward, and roll violently back? But ſet the ſame numbers to another ſenſe;

> While many a merry tale, and many a ſong,
> Chear'd the rough road, we wiſh'd the rough road long.
> The rough road then, returning in a round,
> Mock'd our impatient ſteps, for all was fairy ground.

We have now ſurely loſt much of the delay, and much of the rapidity.

But, to ſhew how little the greateſt maſter of numbers can fix the principles of repreſentative harmony, it will be ſufficient to remark that the poet, who tells us, that

> When Ajax ſtrives ſome rock's vaſt weight to throw,
> The line too labours, and the words move ſlow:
> Not ſo, when ſwift Camilla ſcours the plain,
> Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and ſkims along the main;

when he had enjoyed for about thirty years the praiſe of Camilla's lightneſs of foot, he tried another experiment upon *ſound* and *time*, and produced this memorable triplet;

> Waller was ſmooth; but Dryden taught to join
> The varying verſe, the full reſounding line,
> The long majeſtick march, and energy divine.

Here are the ſwiftneſs of the rapid race, and the march of ſlow-paced majeſty, exhibited by the ſame poet in the ſame ſequence of ſyllables, except that the exact proſodiſt will find the line of *ſwiftneſs* by one time longer than that of *tardineſs*.

Beauties

Beauties of this kind are commonly fancied; and, when real, are technical and nugatory, not to be rejected and not to be solicited.

To the praises which have been accumulated on the "Rape of the Lock" by readers of every class, from the critick to the waiting-maid, it is difficult to make any addition. Of that which is universally allowed to be the most attractive of all ludicrous compositions, let it rather be now enquired from what sources the power of pleasing is derived.

Dr. Warburton, who excelled in critical perspicacity, has remarked that the preternatural agents are very happily adapted to the purposes of the poem. The Heathen deities can no longer gain attention: we should have turned away from a contest between Venus and Diana. The employment of allegorical persons always excites conviction of its own absurdity; they may produce effects, but cannot conduct actions: when the phantom is put in motion, it dissolves: thus *Discord* may raise a mutiny; but *Discord* cannot conduct a march, nor besiege a town. Pope brought in view a new race of Beings, with powers and passions proportionate to their operation. The Sylphs and Gnomes act, at the toilet and the tea-table, what more terrifick and more powerful phantoms perform on the stormy ocean, or the field of battle; they give their proper help, and do their proper mischief.

Pope is said, by an objector, not to have been the inventor of this petty nation; a charge which might with more justice have been brought against the author of the "Iliad," who doubtless adopted the religious system of his country; for what is there, but

the names of his agents, which Pope has not invented? Has he not aſſigned them characters and operations never heard of before? Has he not, at leaſt, given them their firſt poetical exiſtence? If this is not ſufficient to denominate his work original, nothing original ever can be written.

In this work are exhibited, in a very high degree, the two moſt engaging powers of an author. New things are made familiar, and familiar things are made new. A race of aërial people, never heard of before, is preſented to us in a manner ſo clear and eaſy, that the reader ſeeks for no further information, but immediately mingles with his new acquaintance, adopts their intereſts, and attends their purſuits, loves a Sylph, and deteſts a Gnome.

That familiar things are made new, every paragraph will prove. The ſubject of the poem is an event below the common incidents of common life; nothing real is introduced that is not ſeen ſo often as to be no longer regarded; yet the whole detail of a female-day is here brought before us, inveſted with ſo much art of decoration, that, though nothing is diſguiſed, every thing is ſtriking, and we feel all the appetite of curioſity for that from which we have a thouſand times turned faſtidiouſly away.

The purpoſe of the poet is, as he tells us, to laugh at "the little unguarded follies of the female "ſex." It is therefore without juſtice that Dennis charges the "Rape of the Lock" with the want of a moral, and for that reaſon ſets it below the "Lutrin," which expoſes the pride and diſcord of the clergy. Perhaps neither Pope nor Boileau has made the world much better than he found it; but,

if

if they had both ſucceeded, it were eaſy to tell who would have deſerved moſt from publick gratitude. The freaks, and humours, and ſpleen, and vanity of women, as they embroil families in diſcord, and fill houſes with diſquiet, do more to obſtruct the happineſs of life in a year than the ambition of the clergy in many centuries. It has been well obſerved, that the miſery of man proceeds not from any ſingle cruſh of overwhelming evil, but from ſmall vexations continually repeated.

It is remarked by Dennis likewiſe, that the machinery is ſuperfluous; that, by all the buſtle of preternatural operation, the main event is neither haſtened nor retarded. To this charge an efficacious anſwer is not eaſily made. The Sylphs cannot be ſaid to help or to oppoſe; and it muſt be allowed to imply ſome want of art, that their power has not been ſufficiently intermingled with the action. Other parts may likewiſe be charged with want of connection; the game at *ombre* might be ſpared; but, if the Lady had loſt her hair while ſhe was intent upon her cards, it might have been inferred that thoſe who are too fond of play will be in danger of neglecting more important intereſts. Thoſe perhaps are faults; but what are ſuch faults to much excellence!

The Epiſtle of "Eloiſe to Abelard" is one of the moſt happy productions of human wit: the ſubject is ſo judiciouſly choſen, that it would be difficult, in turning over the annals of the world, to find another which ſo many circumſtances concur to recommend. We regularly intereſt ourſelves moſt in the fortune of thoſe who moſt deſerve our notice. Abelard and

Eloiſe were conſpicuous in their days for eminence of merit. The heart naturally loves truth. The adventures and misfortunes of this illuſtrious pair are known from undiſputed hiſtory. Their fate does not leave the mind in hopeleſs dejection; for they both found quiet and conſolation in retirement and piety. So new and ſo affecting is their ſtory, that it ſuperſedes invention; and imagination ranges at full liberty without ſtraggling into ſcenes of fable.

The ſtory, thus ſkilfully adopted, has been diligently improved. Pope has left nothing behind him, which ſeems more the effect of ſtudious perſeverance and laborious reviſal. Here is particularly obſervable the *curioſa felicitas*, a fruitful ſoil and careful cultivation. Here is no crudeneſs of ſenſe, nor aſperity of language.

The ſources from which ſentiments, which have ſo much vigour and efficacy, have been drawn, are ſhewn to be the myſtick writers by the learned author of the "Eſſay on the Life and Writings of Pope;" a book which teaches how the brow of Criticiſm may be ſmoothed, and how ſhe may be enabled, with all her ſeverity, to attract and to delight.

The train of my diſquiſition has now conducted me to that poetical wonder, the tranſlation of the "Iliad;" a performance which no age or nation can pretend to equal. To the Greeks tranſlation was almoſt unknown; it was totally unknown to the inhabitants of Greece. They had no recourſe to the Barbarians for poetical beauties, but ſought for every thing in Homer, where, indeed, there is but little that they might not find.

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The Italians have been very diligent tranflators; but I can hear of no verfion, unlefs perhaps Anguilara's Ovid may be excepted, which is read with eagernefs. The "Iliad" of Salvini every reader may difcover to be punctilioufly exact; but it feems to be the work of a linguift fkilfully pedantic; and his countrymen, the proper judges of its power to pleafe, reject it with difguft.

Their predeceffors the Romans have left fome fpecimens of tranflation behind them, and that employment muft have had fome credit in which Tully and Germanicus engaged; but unlefs we fuppofe, what is perhaps true, that the plays of Terence were verfions of Menander, nothing tranflated feems ever to have rifen to high reputation. The French, in the meridian hour of their learning, were very laudably induftrious to enrich their own language with the wifdom of the ancients; but found themfelves reduced, by whatever neceffity, to turn the Greek and Roman poetry into profe. Whoever could read an author, could tranflate him. From fuch rivals little can be feared.

The chief help of Pope in this audacious undertaking was drawn from the verfions of Dryden. Virgil had borrowed much of his imagery from Homer; and part of the debt was now paid by his tranflator. Pope fearched the pages of Dryden for happy combinations of heroick diction; but it will not be denied that he added much to what he found. He cultivated our language with fo much diligence and art, that he has left in his "Homer" a treafure of poetical elegances to pofterity. His verfion may be faid to have tuned the Englifh tongue; for fince its appear-

ance no writer, however deficient in other powers, has wanted melody. Such a series of lines, so elaborately corrected, and so sweetly modulated, took possession of the publick ear; the vulgar was enamoured of the poem, and the learned wondered at the translation.

But in the most general applause discordant voices will always be heard. It has been objected by some, who wish to be numbered among the sons of learning, that Pope's version of Homer is not Homerical: that it exhibits no resemblance of the original and characteristick manner of the Father of Poetry, as it wants his artless grandeur, his unaffected majesty *. This cannot be totally denied; but it must be remembered that *necessitas quod cogit defendit*; that may be lawfully done which cannot be forborn. Time and place will always enforce regard. In estimating this translation, consideration must be had of the nature of our language, the form of our metre, and, above all, of the change which two thousands years have made in the modes of life and the habits of thought. Virgil wrote in a language of the same general fabrick with that of Homer, in verses of the same measure, and in an age nearer to Homer's time by eighteen hundred years;

* Bentley was one of these. He and Pope, soon after the publication of Homer, met at Dr. Mead's at dinner; when Pope, desirous of his opinion of the translation, addressed him thus: "Dr. "Bentley, I ordered my bookseller to send you your books; I "hope you received them." Bentley, who had purposely avoided saying any thing about Homer, pretended not to understand him, and asked, 'Books! books! what books?' 'My Homer,' replied Pope, 'which you did me the honour to subscribe for.'—'Oh,' said Bentley, 'ay, now I recollect—your translation:—it is a 'pretty poem, Mr. Pope; but you must not call it Homer.' H.

yet

yet he found, even then, the ſtate of the world ſo much altered, and the demand for elegance ſo much increaſed, that mere nature would be endured no longer; and perhaps, in the multitude of borrowed paſſages, very few can be ſhewn which he has not embelliſhed.

There is a time when nations, emerging from barbarity, and falling into regular ſubordination, gain leiſure to grow wiſe, and feel the ſhame of ignorance and the craving pain of unſatisfied curioſity. To this hunger of the mind plain ſenſe is grateful; that which fills the void removes uneaſineſs, and to be free from pain for a while is pleaſure; but repletion generates faſtidiouſneſs; a ſaturated intellect ſoon becomes luxurious, and knowledge finds no willing reception till it is recommended by artificial diction. Thus it will be found, in the progreſs of learning, that in all nations the firſt writers are ſimple, and that every age improves in elegance. One refinement always makes way for another; and what was expedient to Virgil was neceſſary to Pope.

I ſuppoſe many readers of the Engliſh "Iliad," when they have been touched with ſome unexpected beauty of the lighter kind, have tried to enjoy it in the original, where, alas! it was not to be found. Homer doubtleſs owes to his tranſlator many Ovidian graces not exactly ſuitable to his character; but to have added can be no great crime, if nothing be taken away. Elegance is ſurely to be deſired, if it be not gained at the expence of dignity. A hero would wiſh to be loved, as well as to be reverenced.

To a thouſand cavils one anſwer is ſufficient; the purpoſe of a writer is to be read, and the criticiſm which

which would destroy the power of pleasing must be blown aside. Pope wrote for his own age and his own nation: he knew that it was necessary to colour the images and point the sentiments of his author; he therefore made him graceful, but lost him some of his sublimity.

The copious notes with which the version is accompanied, and by which it is recommended to many readers, though they were undoubtedly written to swell the volumes, ought not to pass without praise: commentaries which attract the reader by the pleasure of perusal have not often appeared; the notes of others are read to clear difficulties, those of Pope to vary entertainment.

It has however been objected with sufficient reason, that there is in the commentary too much of unseasonable levity and affected gaiety; that too many appeals are made to the Ladies, and the ease which is so carefully preserved is sometimes the ease of a trifler. Every art has its terms, and every kind of instruction its proper style; the gravity of common criticks may be tedious, but is less despicable than childish merriment.

Of the "Odyssey" nothing remains to be observed: the same general praise may be given to both translations, and a particular examination of either would require a large volume. The notes were written by Broome, who endeavoured, not unsuccessfully, to imitate his master.

Of the "Dunciad" the hint is confessedly taken from Dryden's "Mac Flecknoe;" but the plan is so enlarged and diversified as justly to claim the praise of an original, and affords the best specimen

that

that has yet appeared of perſonal ſatire ludicrouſly pompous.

That the deſign was moral, whatever the author might tell either his readers or himſelf, I am not convinced. The firſt motive was the deſire of revenging the contempt with which Theobald had treated his "Shakſpeare," and regaining the honour which he had loſt, by cruſhing his opponent. Theobald was not of bulk enough to fill a poem, and therefore it was neceſſary to find other enemies with other names, at whoſe expence he might divert the publick.

In this deſign there was petulance and malignity enough; but I cannot think it very criminal. An author places himſelf uncalled before the tribunal of Criticiſm, and ſolicits fame at the hazard of diſgrace. Dulneſs or deformity are not culpable in themſelves, but may be very juſtly reproached when they pretend to the honour of wit or the influence of beauty. If bad writers were to paſs without reprehenſion, what ſhould reſtrain them? *impune diem conſumpſerit ingens Telephus*; and upon bad writers only will cenſure have much effect. The ſatire, which brought Theobald and Moore into contempt, dropped impotent from Bentley, like the javelin of Priam.

All truth is valuable, and ſatirical criticiſm may be conſidered as uſeful when it rectifies error and improves judgement; he that refines the publick taſte is a publick benefactor.

The beauties of this poem are well known; its chief fault is the groſſneſs of its images. Pope and Swift had an unnatural delight in ideas phyſically impure, ſuch as every other tongue utters with unwillingneſs,

willingneſs, and of which every ear ſhrinks from the mention.

But even this fault, offenſive as it is, may be forgiven for the excellence of other paſſages; ſuch as the formation and diſſolution of Moore, the account of the Traveller, the misfortune of the Floriſt, and the crowded thoughts and ſtately numbers which dignify the concluding paragraph.

The alterations which have been made in the "Dunciad," not always for the better, require that it ſhould be publiſhed, as in the preſent collection, with all its variations.

The "Eſſay on Man" was a work of great labour and long conſideration, but certainly not the happieſt of Pope's performances. The ſubject is perhaps not very proper for poetry; and the poet was not ſufficiently maſter of his ſubject; metaphyſical morality was to him a new ſtudy; he was proud of his acquiſitions, and, ſuppoſing himſelf maſter of great ſecrets, was in haſte to teach what he had not learned. Thus he tells us, in the firſt Epiſtle, that from the nature of the Supreme Being may be deduced an order of beings ſuch as mankind, becauſe infinite Excellence can do only what is beſt. He finds out that theſe beings muſt be "ſomewhere;" and that "all the "queſtion is, whether man be in a wrong place." Surely if, according to the poet's Leibnitian reaſoning, we may infer that man ought to be, only becauſe he is, we may allow that his place is the right place, becauſe he has it. Supreme Wiſdom is not leſs infallible in diſpoſing than in creating. But what is meant by *ſomewhere* and *place*, and *wrong place*, it had

had been vain to aſk Pope, who probably had never aſked himſelf

Having exalted himſelf into the chair of wiſdom, he tells us much that every man knows, and much that he does not know himſelf; that we ſee but little, and that the order of the univerſe is beyond our comprehenſion; an opinion not very uncommon; and that there is a chain of ſubordinate beings "from "infinite to nothing," of which himſelf and his readers are equally ignorant. But he gives us one comfort, which without his help he ſuppoſes unattainable, in the poſition "that though we are fools, yet "God is wiſe."

This Eſſay affords an egregious inſtance of the predominance of genius, the dazzling ſplendour of imagery, and the ſeductive powers of eloquence. Never was penury of knowledge and vulgarity of ſentiment ſo happily diſguiſed. The reader feels his mind full, though he learns nothing; and, when he meets it in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurſe. When theſe wonder-working ſounds ſink into ſenſe, and the doctrine of the Eſſay, diſrobed of its ornaments, is left to the powers of its naked excellence, what ſhall we diſcover? That we are, in compariſon with our Creator, very weak and ignorant; that we do not uphold the chain of exiſtence; and that we could not make one another with more ſkill than we are made. We may learn yet more: that the arts of human life were copied from the inſtinctive operations of other animals; that, if the world be made for man, it may be ſaid that man was made for geeſe. To theſe profound principles of natural knowledge are added ſome

moral

moral inſtructions equally new; that ſelf-intereſt, well underſtood, will produce ſocial concord; that men are mutual gainers by mutual benefits; that evil is ſometimes balanced by good; that human advantages are unſtable and fallacious, of uncertain duration and doubtful effect; that our true honour is, not to have a great part, but to act it well; that virtue only is our own; and that happineſs is always in our power.

Surely a man of no very comprehenſive ſearch may venture to ſay that he has heard all this before; but it was never till now recommended by ſuch a blaze of embelliſhments, or ſuch ſweetneſs of melody. The vigorous contraction of ſome thoughts, the luxuriant amplification of others, the incidental illuſtrations, and ſometimes the dignity, ſometimes the ſoftneſs of the verſes, enchain philoſophy, ſuſpend criticiſm, and oppreſs judgement by overpowering pleaſure.

This is true of many paragraphs; yet, if I had undertaken to exemplify Pope's felicity of compoſition before a rigid critick, I ſhould not ſelect the "Eſſay "on Man;" for it contains more lines unſucceſsfully laboured, more harſhneſs of diction, more thoughts imperfectly expreſſed, more levity without elegance, and more heavineſs without ſtrength, than will eaſily be found in all his other works.

The "Characters of Men and Women" are the product of diligent ſpeculation upon human life; much labour has been beſtowed upon them, and Pope very ſeldom laboured in vain. That his excellence may be properly eſtimated, I recommend a compariſon of his "Characters of Women" with Boileau's Satire;

Satire; it will then be seen with how much more perspicacity female nature is investigated, and female excellence selected; and he surely is no mean writer to whom Boileau should be found inferior. The "Characters of Men," however, are written with more, if not with deeper, thought, and exhibit many passages exquisitely beautiful. The "Gem "and the Flower" will not easily be equalled. In the women's part are some defects; the character of Atossa is not so neatly finished as that of Clodio; and some of the female characters may be found perhaps more frequently among men; what is said of Philomede was true of Prior.

In the Epistles to Lord Bathurst and Lord Burlington, Dr. Warburton has endeavoured to find a train of thought which was never in the writer's head, and, to support his hypothesis, has printed that first which was published last. In one, the most valuable passage is perhaps the Elegy on "Good Sense;" and the other, the "End of the Duke of Buck-"ingham."

The Epistle to Arbuthnot, now arbitrarily called the "Prologue to the Satires," is a performance consisting, as it seems, of many fragments wrought into one design, which by this union of scattered beauties contains more striking paragraphs than could probably have been brought together into an occasional work. As there is no stronger motive to exertion than self-defence, no part has more elegance, spirit, or dignity, than the poet's vindication of his own character. The meanest passage is the satire upon Sporus.

Of

Of the two poems which derived their names from the year, and which are called the "Epilogue "to the Satires," it was very juſtly remarked by Savage, that the ſecond was in the whole more ſtrongly conceived, and more equally ſupported, but that it had no ſingle paſſages equal to the contention in the firſt for the dignity of Vice, and the celebration of the triumph of Corruption.

The Imitations of Horace ſeem to have been written as relaxations of his genius. This employment became his favourite by its facility; the plan was ready to his hand, and nothing was required but to accommodate as he could the ſentiments of an old author to recent facts or familiar images; but what is eaſy is ſeldom excellent; ſuch imitations cannot give pleaſure to common readers; the man of learning may be ſometimes ſurpriſed and delighted by an unexpected parallel; but the compariſon requires knowledge of the original, which will likewiſe often detect ſtrained applications. Between Roman images and Engliſh manners, there will be an irreconcileable diſſimilitude, and the works will be generally uncouth and party-coloured; neither original nor tranſlated, neither ancient nor modern *.

Pope

* In one of theſe poems is a couplet, to which belongs a ſtory that I once heard the reverend Dr. Ridley relate.

'Slander or poiſon dread from Delia's rage;
'Hard words, or hanging if your judge be ****.'

Sir Francis Page, a judge well known in his time, conceiving that his name was meant to fill up the blank, ſent his clerk to Mr. Pope, to complain of the inſult. Pope told the young man that the

Pope had, in proportions very nicely adjuſted to each other, all the qualities that conſtitute genius. He had *Invention*, by which new trains of events are formed, and new ſcenes of imagery diſplayed, as in the "Rape of the Lock;" and by which extrinſick and adventitious embelliſhments and illuſtrations are connected with a known ſubject, as in the "Eſſay on Criticiſm." He had *Imagination*, which ſtrongly impreſſes on the writer's mind, and enables him to convey to the reader, the various forms of nature, incidents of life, and energies of paſſion, as in his "Eloiſa," "Windſor Foreſt," and "Ethick Epiſtles." He had *Judgement*, which ſelects from life or nature what the preſent purpoſe requires, and by ſeparating the eſſence of things from its concomitants, often makes the repreſentation more powerful than the reality: and he had colours of language always before him, ready to decorate his matter with every grace of elegant expreſſion, as when he accommodates his diction to the wonderful multiplicity of Homer's ſentiments and deſcriptions.

Poetical expreſſion includes ſound as well as meaning; "Muſick," ſays Dryden, "is inarticu- "late poetry;" among the excellences of Pope,

the blank might be ſupplied by many monoſyllables, other than the judge's name:—'but, ſir,' ſaid the clerk, 'the judge ſays 'that no other word will make ſenſe of the paſſage.'—'So then it 'ſeems,' ſays Pope, 'your maſter is not only a judge, but a poet: 'as that is the caſe, the odds are againſt me. Give my reſpects 'to the judge, and tell him, I will not contend with one that 'has the advantage of me, and he may fill up the blank as he 'pleaſes.' H.

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therefore, muſt be mentioned the melody of his metre. By peruſing the works of Dryden, he diſcovered the moſt perfect fabrick of Engliſh verſe, and habituated himſelf to that only which he found the beſt; in conſequence of which reſtraint, his poetry has been cenſured as too uniformly muſical, and as glutting the ear with unvaried ſweetneſs. I ſuſpect this objection to be the cant of thoſe who judge by principles rather than perception; and who would even themſelves have leſs pleaſure in his works, if he had tried to relieve attention by ſtudied diſcords, or affected to break his lines and vary his pauſes.

But though he was thus careful of his verſification, he did not oppreſs his powers with ſuperfluous rigour. He ſeems to have thought with Boileau, that the practice of writing might be refined till the difficulty ſhould overbalance the advantage. The conſtruction of the language is not always ſtrictly grammatical; with thoſe rhymes which preſcription had conjoined, he contented himſelf, without regard to Swift's remonſtrances, though there was no ſtriking conſonance; nor was he very careful to vary his terminations, or to refuſe admiſſion, at a ſmall diſtance, to the ſame rhymes.

To Swift's edict for the excluſion of Alexandrines and Triplets he paid little regard; he admitted them, but, in the opinion of Fenton, too rarely; he uſes them more liberally in his tranſlation than his poems.

He has a few double rhymes; and always, I think, unſucceſsfully, except once in the "Rape "of the Lock."

"Exple-

Expletives he very early ejected from his verſes; but he now and then admits an epithet rather commodious than important. Each of the ſix firſt lines of the "Iliad" might loſe two ſyllables with very little diminution of the meaning; and ſometimes, after all his art and labour, one verſe ſeems to be made for the ſake of another. In his latter productions the diction in ſometimes vitiated by French idioms, with which Bolingbroke had perhaps infected him.

I have been told that the couplet by which he declared his own ear to be moſt gratified was this:

Lo, where Mœotis ſleeps, and hardly flows
The freezing Tanais through a waſte of ſnows.

But the reaſon of this preference I cannot diſcover.

It is remarked by Watts, that there is ſcarcely a happy combination of words, or a phraſe poetically elegant in the Engliſh language, which Pope has not inſerted into his verſion of Homer. How he obtained poſſeſſion of ſo many beauties of ſpeech, it were deſirable to know. That he gleaned from authors, obſcure as well as eminent, what he thought brilliant or uſeful, and preſerved it all in a regular collection, is not unlikely. When, in his laſt years, Hall's Satires were ſhewn him, he wiſhed that he had ſeen them ſooner.

New ſentiments and new images others may produce; but to attempt any further improvement of verſification will be dangerous. Art and diligence have now done their beſt, and what ſhall be added will be the effort of tedious toil and needleſs curioſity.

After all this, it is ſurely ſuperfluous to anſwer the queſtion that has once been aſked, Whether Pope was a poet; otherwiſe than by aſking in return, If Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found? To circumſcribe poetry by a definition will only ſhew the narrowneſs of the definer, though a definition which ſhall exclude Pope will not eaſily be made. Let us look round upon the preſent time, and back upon the paſt; let us enquire to whom the voice of mankind has decreed the wreath of poetry; let their productions be examined, and their claims ſtated, and the pretenſions of Pope will be no more diſputed. Had he given the world only his verſion, the name of poet muſt have been allowed him: if the writer of the "Iliad" were to claſs his ſucceſſors, he would aſſign a very high place to his tranſlator, without requiring any other evidence of Genius.

The following Letter, of which the original is in the hands of Lord Hardwicke, was communicated to me by the kindneſs of Mr. Jodrell.

"To Mr. BRIDGES, at the Biſhop of London's at Fulham.

"SIR,

"The favour of your Letter, with your Remarks, can never be enough acknowledged; and the ſpeed with which you diſcharged ſo troubleſome a taſk doubles the obligation.

"I muſt own, you have pleaſed me very much by the commendations ſo ill beſtowed upon me; but,

but, I assure you, much more by the frankness of your censure, which I ought to take the more kindly of the two, as it is more advantage to a scribbler to be improved in his judgement than to be soothed in his vanity. The greater part of those deviations, from the Greek, which you have observed, I was led into by Chapman and Hobbes; who are, it seems, as much celebrated for their knowledge of the original, as they are decryed for the badness of their translations. Chapman pretends to have restored the genuine sense of the author, from the mistakes of all former explainers, in several hundred places: and the Cambridge editors of the large Homer, in Greek and Latin, attributed so much to Hobbes, that they confess they have corrected the old Latin interpretation very often by his version. For my part, I generally took the author's meaning to be as you have explained it; yet their authority, joined to the knowledge of my own imperfectness in the language, overruled me. However, Sir, you may be confident, I think you in the right, because you happen to be of my opinion: for, men (let them say what they will) never approve any other's sense, but as it squares with their own. But you have made me much more proud of, and positive in my judgment, since it is strengthened by yours. I think your criticisms, which regard the expression, very just, and shall make my profit of them: to give you some proof that I am in earnest, I will alter three verses on your bare objection, though I have Mr. Dryden's example for each of them. And this, I hope, you will account no small piece of obedience, from one, who values the au-

thority of one true poet above that of twenty criticks or commentators. But, though I ſpeak thus of commentators, I will continue to read carefully all I can procure, to make up, that way, for my own want of critical underſtanding in the original beauties of Homer. Though the greateſt of them are certainly thoſe of Invention and Deſign, which are not at all confined to the language: for the diſtinguiſhing excellences of Homer are (by the conſent of the beſt criticks of all nations) firſt in the manners, (which include all the ſpeeches, as being no other than the repreſentations of each perſon's manners by his words:) and then in that rapture and fire, which carries you away with him, with that wonderful force, that no man who has a true poetical ſpirit is maſter of himſelf, while he reads him. Homer makes you intereſted and concerned before you are aware, all at once: where Virgil does it by ſoft degrees. This, I believe, is what a tranſlator of Homer ought principally to imitate; and it is very hard for any tranſlator to come up to it, becauſe the chief reaſon why all tranſlations fall ſhort of their originals is, that the very conſtraint they are obliged to, renders them heavy and diſpirited.

"The great beauty of Homer's language, as I take it, conſiſts in that noble ſimplicity which runs through all his works; (and yet his diction, contrary to what one would imagine conſiſtent with ſimplicity, is at the ſame time very copious.) I don't know how I have run into this pedantry in a Letter, but I find I have ſaid to much, as well as ſpoken too inconſiderately: what farther thoughts I have ſpoken upon this ſubject, I ſhall be glad to com-

communicate to you (for my own improvement) when we meet; which is a happineſs I very earneſtly deſire, as I do likewiſe ſome opportunity of proving how much I think myſelf obliged to your friendſhip, and how truly I am, Sir,

"Your moſt faithful, humble ſervant,

"A. Pope."

The Criticiſm upon Pope's Epitaphs, which was printed in "The Univerſal Viſitor," is placed here, being too minute and particular to be inſerted in the Life.

EVERY Art is beſt taught by example. Nothing contributes more to the cultivation of propriety, than remarks on the works of thoſe who have moſt excelled. I ſhall therefore endeavour, at this *viſit*, to entertain the young ſtudents in poetry with an examination of Pope's Epitaphs.

To define an epitaph is uſeleſs; every one knows that it is an inſcription on a Tomb. An epitaph, therefore, implies no particular character of writing, but may be compoſed in verſe or proſe. It is indeed commonly panegyrical; becauſe we are ſeldom diſtinguiſhed with a ſtone but by our friends; but it has no rule to reſtrain or mollify it, except this, that it ought not to be longer than common beholders may be expected to have leiſure and patience to peruſe.

I.

On CHARLES *Earl of* DORSET, *in the Church of Wythybam in Suffex.*

Dorfet, the grace of courts, the Mufe's pride,
Patron of arts, and judge of nature, dy'd.
The fcourge of pride, though fanctify'd or great,
Of fops in learning, and of knaves in ftate;
Yet foft in nature, though fevere his lay,
His anger moral, and his wifdom gay.
Bleft fatyrift! who touch'd the means fo true,
As fhow'd, Vice had his hate and pity too.
Bleft courtier! who could king and country pleafe,
Yet facred kept his friendfhip, and his eafe.
Bleft peer! his great forefather's every grace
Reflecting, and reflected on his race;
Where other Buckhurfts, other Dorfets fhine,
And patriots ftill, or poets, deck the line.

The firft diftich of this epitaph contains a kind of information which few would want, that the man for whom the tomb was erected, *died*. There are indeed fome qualities worthy of praife afcribed to the dead, but none that were likely to exempt him from the lot of man, or incline us much to wonder that he fhould die. What is meant by "judge of na- "ture," is not eafy to fay. Nature is not the object of human judgement; for it is in vain to judge where we cannot alter. If by nature is meant, what is commonly called *nature* by the criticks, a juft reprefentation of things really exifting, and actions really performed, nature cannot be properly op-

pofed

posed to *art*; nature being, in this sense, only the best effect of *art*.

The scourge of pride—

Of this couplet, the second line is not, what is intended, an illustration of the former. *Pride*, in the *Great*, is indeed well enough connected with knaves in state, though *knaves* is a word rather too ludicrous and light; but the mention of *sanctified* pride will not lead the thoughts to *fops in learning*, but rather to some species of tyranny or oppression, something more gloomy and more formidable than foppery.

Yet soft his nature—

This is a high compliment, but was not first bestowed on Dorset by Pope. The next verse is extremely beautiful.

Blest satyrist!—

In this distich is another line of which Pope was not the author. I do not mean to blame these imitations with much harshness; in long performances they are scarcely to be avoided, and in shorter they may be indulged, because the train of the composition may naturally involve them, or the scantiness of the subject allow little choice. However, what is borrowed is not to be enjoyed as our own; and it is the business of critical justice to give every bird of the Muses his proper feather.

Blest courtier!—

Whether

Whether a courtier can properly be commended for keeping his *eaſe ſacred*, may perhaps be diſputable. To pleaſe king and country, without ſacrificing friendſhip to any change of times, was a very uncommon inſtance of prudence or felicity, and deſerved to be kept ſeparate from ſo poor a commendation as care of his eaſe. I wiſh our poets would attend a little more accurately to the uſe of the word *ſacred*, which ſurely ſhould never be applied in a ſerious compoſition, but where ſome reference may be made to a higher Being, or where ſome duty is exacted or implied. A man may keep his friendſhip ſacred, becauſe promiſes of friendſhip are very awful ties; but methinks he cannot, but in a burleſque ſenſe, be ſaid to keep his eaſe *ſacred*.

Bleſt peer!—

The bleſſing aſcribed to the *peer* has no connection with his peerage: they might happen to any other man, whoſe poſterity were likely to be regarded.

I know not whether this epitaph be worthy either of the writer or the man entombed.

II.

On Sir William Trumbal, *one of the Principal Secretaries of State to King* William III. *who, having reſigned his place, died in his retirement at Eaſthamſtead in Berkſhire*, 1716.

A pleaſing form, a firm, yet cautious mind,
Sincere, though prudent; conſtant, yet reſign'd;

Honour

Honour unchang'd, a principle profeſt,
Fix'd to one ſide, but moderate to the reſt;
An honeſt courtier, yet a patriot too,
Juſt to his prince, and to his country true;
Fill'd with the ſenſe of age, the fire of youth,
A ſcorn of wrangling, yet a zeal for truth;
A generous faith, from ſuperſtition free;
A love to peace, and hate of tyranny;
Such this man was; who now, from earth remov'd,
At length enjoys that liberty he lov'd.

In this epitaph, as in many others, there appears, at the firſt view, a fault which I think ſcarcely any beauty can compenſate. The name is omitted. The end of an epitaph is to convey ſome account of the dead; and to what purpoſe is any thing told of him whoſe name is concealed? An epitaph, and a hiſtory of a nameleſs hero, are equally abſurd, ſince the virtues and qualities ſo recounted in either are ſcattered at the mercy of fortune to be appropriated by gueſs. The name, it is true, may be read upon the ſtone; but what obligation has it to the poet, whoſe verſes wander over the earth, and leave their ſubject behind them, and who is forced, like an unſkilful painter, to make his purpoſe known by adventitious help?

This epitaph is wholly without elevation, and contains nothing ſtriking or particular; but the poet is not to be blamed for the defects of his ſubject. He ſaid perhaps the beſt that could be ſaid. There are, however, ſome defects which were not made neceſſary by the character in which he was employed. There is no oppoſition between

an *honest courtier* and a *patriot*; for, an *honest courtier* cannot but be a *patriot*.

It was unsuitable to the nicety required in short compositions, to close his verse with the word *too*: every rhyme should be a word of emphasis; nor can this rule be safely neglected, except where the length of the poem makes slight inaccuracies excusable, or allows room for beauties sufficient to overpower the effects of petty faults.

At the beginning of the seventh line the word *filled* is weak and prosaic, having no particular adaptation to any of the words that follow it.

The thought in the last line is impertinent, having no connexion with the foregoing character, nor with the condition of the man described. Had the epitaph been written on the poor conspirator * who died lately in prison, after a confinement of more than forty years, without any crime proved against him, the sentiment had been just and pathetical; but why should Trumbal be congratulated upon his liberty, who had never known restraint?

III.

On the Hon. SIMON HARCOURT, *only Son of the Lord Chancellor* HARCOURT, *at the Church of Stanton-Harcourt in Oxfordshire*, 1720.

To this sad shrine, whoe'er thou art, draw near,
Here lies the friend most lov'd, the son most dear:
Who ne'er knew joy, but friendship might divide,
Or gave his father grief but when he dy'd.

* Major Bernardi; who died in Newgate, Sept. 20, 1736. See Gent. Mag. vol. I. p. 125. N.

How

How vain is reaſon, eloquence how weak!
If Pope muſt tell what Harcourt cannot ſpeak.
Oh, let thy once-lov'd friend inſcribe thy ſtone,
And with a father's ſorrows mix his own!

This epitaph is principally remarkable for the artful introduction of the name, which is inſerted with a peculiar felicity, to which chance muſt concur with genius, which no man can hope to attain twice, and which cannot be copied but with ſervile imitation.

I cannot but wiſh that, of this inſcription, the two laſt lines had been omitted, as they take away from the energy what they do not add to the ſenſe.

IV.

On JAMES CRAGGS, *Eſq.*
In Weſtminſter-Abbey.

JACOBUS CRAGGS,
REGI MAGNAE BRITANNIAE A SECRETIS
ET CONSILIIS SANCTIORIBVS
PRINCIPIS PARITER AC POPULI AMOR ET DELICIAE:
VIXIT TITULIS ET INVIDIA MAJOR,
ANNOS HEV PAVCOS, XXXV.
OB. FEB. XVI. MDCCXX.

Stateſman, yet friend to truth! of ſoul ſincere,
In action faithful, and in honour clear!
Who broke no promiſe, ſerv'd no private end,
Who gain'd no title, and who loſt no friend;
Ennobled by himſelf, by all approv'd,
Prais'd, wept, and honour'd, by the Muſe he lov'd.

The

The lines on Craggs were not originally intended for an epitaph; and therefore ſome faults are to be imputed to the violence with which they are torn from the poems that firſt contained them. We may, however, obſerve ſome defects. There is a redundancy of words in the firſt couplet: it is ſuperfluous to tell of him, who was *ſincere*, *true*, and *faithful*, that he was *in honour clear*.

There ſeems to be an oppoſition intended in the fourth line, which is not very obvious: where is the relation between the two poſitions, that he *gained no title* and *loſt no friend?*

It may be proper here to remark the abſurdity of joining, in the ſame inſcription, Latin and Engliſh, or verſe and proſe. If either language be preferable to the other, let that only be uſed; for, no reaſon can be given why part of the information ſhould be given in one tongue, and part in another, on a tomb, more than in any other place, or any other occaſion; and to tell all that can be conveniently told in verſe, and then to call in the help of proſe, has always the appearance of a very artleſs expedient, or of an attempt unaccompliſhed. Such an epitaph reſembles the converſation of a foreigner, who tells part of his meaning by words, and conveys part by ſigns.

V.

Intended for Mr. ROWE.
In Weſtminſter-Abbey.

Thy reliques, Rowe, to this fair urn we truſt,
And ſacred, place by Dryden's awful duſt;

Beneath

Beneath a rude and nameleſs ſtone he lies,
To which thy tomb ſhall guide inquiring eyes.
Peace to thy gentle ſhade, and endleſs reſt!
Bleſt in thy genius, in thy love too bleſt;
One grateful woman to thy fame ſupplies
What a whole thankleſs land to his denies.

Of this inſcription the chief fault is, that it belongs leſs to Rowe, for whom it was written, than to Dryden, who was buried near him; and indeed gives very little information concerning either.

To wiſh *Peace to thy ſhade* is too mythological to be admitted into a Chriſtian temple: the ancient worſhip has infected almoſt all our other compoſitions, and might therefore be contented to ſpare our epithets. Let fiction, at leaſt, ceaſe with life, and let us be ſerious over the grave.

VI.

On Mrs. CORBET, *who died of a Cancer in her Breaſt* *.

Here reſts a woman, good without pretence,
Bleſt with plain reaſon, and with ſober ſenſe;
No conqueſt ſhe, but o'er herſelf, deſir'd;
No arts eſſay'd, but not to be admir'd.
Paſſion and pride were to her ſoul unknown,
Convinc'd that Virtue only is our own.
So unaffected, ſo compos'd a mind,
So firm, yet ſoft, ſo ſtrong, yet ſo refin'd,
Heaven, as its pureſt gold, by tortures try'd;
The ſaint ſuſtain'd it, but the woman dy'd.

* In the North aile of the pariſh church of St. Margaret Weſtminſter. *H.*

I have always confidered this as the moft valuable of all Pope's epitaphs; the fubject of it is a character not difcriminated by any fhining or eminent peculiarities; yet that which really makes, though not the fplendour, the felicity of life, and that which every wife man will choofe for his final and lafting companion in the languor of age, in the quiet of privacy, when he departs weary and difgufted from the oftentatious, the volatile, and the vain. Of fuch a character, which the dull overlook, and the gay defpife, it was fit that the value fhould be made known, and the dignity eftablifhed. Domeftic virtue, as it is exerted without great occafions, or confpicuous confequences, in an even unnoted tenor, required the genius of Pope to difplay it in fuch a manner as might attract regard, and enforce reverence. Who can forbear to lament that this amiable woman has no name in the verfes?

If the particular lines of this infcription be examined, it will appear lefs faulty than the reft. There is fcarce one line taken from common places, unlefs it be that in which *only Virtue* is faid to be *our own*. I once heard a Lady of great beauty and excellence object to the fourth line, that it contained an unnatural and incredible panegyrick. Of this let the Ladies judge.

VII. On

VII.

On the Monument of the Hon. Robert Digby, *and of his Sister* Mary, *erected by their Father the Lord* Digby, *in the church of Sherborne in Dorsetshire,* 1727.

Go! fair example of untainted youth,
Of modest wisdom, and pacific truth:
Compos'd in sufferings, and in joy sedate,
Good without noise, without pretension great.
Just of thy word, in every thought sincere,
Who knew no wish but what the world might hear:
Of softest manners, unaffected mind,
Lover of peace, and friend of human kind:
Go, live! for heaven's eternal year is thine,
Go, and exalt thy mortal to divine.
And thou, blest maid! attendant on his doom,
Pensive hast follow'd to the silent tomb,
Steer'd the same course to the same quiet shore,
Not parted long, and now to part no more!
Go, then, where only bliss sincere is known!
Go, where to love and to enjoy are one!
Yet take these tears, Mortality's relief,
And, till we share your joys, forgive our grief:
These little rites, a stone, a verse receive,
'Tis all a father, all a friend can give!

This epitaph contains of the brother only a general indiscriminate character, and of the sister tells nothing but that she died. The difficulty in writing epitaphs is to give a particular and appropriate praise. This, however, is not always to be performed, whatever be the diligence or ability of the writer; for, the greater part of mankind *have no character at all*, have little that distinguishes them from others equally

good or bad, and therefore nothing can be ſaid of them which may not be applied with equal propriety to a thouſand more. It is indeed no great panegyrick, that there is incloſed in this tomb one who was born in one year, and died in another; yet many uſeful and amiable lives have been ſpent, which yet leave little materials for any other memorial. Theſe are however not the proper ſubjects of poetry; and whenever friendſhip, or any other motive, obliges a poet to write on ſuch ſubjects, he muſt be forgiven if he ſometimes wanders in generalities, and utters the ſame praiſes over different tombs.

The ſcantineſs of human praiſes can ſcarcely be made more apparent, than by remarking how often Pope has, in the few epitaphs which he compoſed, found it neceſſary to borrow from himſelf. The fourteen epitaphs, which he has written, compriſe about an hundred and forty lines, in which there are more repetitions than will eaſily be found in all the reſt of his works. In the eight lines which make the character of Digby, there is ſcarce any thought, or word, which may not be found in the other epitaphs.

The ninth line, which is far the ſtrongeſt and moſt elegant, is borrowed from Dryden. The concluſion is the ſame with that on Harcourt, but is here more elegant and better connected.

VIII.

On Sir GODFREY KNELLER.
In Weſtminſter-Abbey, 1723.

Kneller, by Heaven, and not a maſter, taught,
Whoſe art was nature, and whoſe pictures thought;
Now for two ages, having ſnatch'd from fate
Whate'er was beauteous, or whate'er was great,
Lies crown'd with Princes honours, Poets lays,
Due to his merit, and brave thirſt of praiſe.
Living, great Nature fear'd he might outvie
Her works; and dying, fears herſelf may die.

Of this epitaph the firſt couplet is good, the ſecond not bad, the third is deformed with a broken metaphor, the word *crowned* not being applicable to the *honours* or the *lays*, and the fourth is not only borrowed from the epitaph on Raphael, but of a very harſh conſtruction.

IX.

On General HENRY WITHERS.
In Weſtminſter-Abbey, 1729.

Here, Withers, reſt! thou braveſt, gentleſt mind,
Thy country's friend, but more of human kind.
O! born to arms! O! worth in youth approv'd!
O! ſoft humanity in age belov'd!
For thee the hardy veteran drops a tear,
And the gay courtier feels the ſigh ſincere.
Withers, adieu! yet not with thee remove
Thy martial ſpirit, or thy ſocial love!
Amidſt corruption, luxury, and rage,
Still leave ſome ancient virtues to our age:
Nor let us ſay (thoſe Engliſh glories gone)
The laſt true Briton lies beneath this ſtone.

The epitaph on Withers affords another inſtance of common places, though ſomewhat diverſified, by mingled qualities, and the peculiarity of a profeſſion.

The ſecond couplet is abrupt, general, and unpleaſing; exclamation ſeldom ſucceeds in our language; and, I think, it may be obſerved that the particle O! uſed at the beginning of a ſentence, always offends.

The third couplet is more happy; the value expreſſed for him, by different ſorts of men, raiſes him to eſteem; there is yet ſomething of the common cant of ſuperficial ſatiriſts, who ſuppoſe that the inſincerity of a courtier deſtroys all his ſenſations, and that he is equally a diſſembler to the living and the dead.

At the third couplet I ſhould wiſh the epitaph to cloſe, but that I ſhould be unwilling to loſe the two next lines, which yet are dearly bought if they cannot be retained without the four that follow them.

X.

On Mr. Elijah Fenton.

At Eaſthamſtead in Berkſhire, 1730.

This modeſt ſtone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly ſay, Here lies an honeſt man:
A poet, bleſt beyond the poet's fate,
Whom Heaven kept ſacred from the Proud and Great;
Foe to loud praiſe, and friend to learned eaſe,
Content with ſcience in the vale of peace.
Calmly he look'd on either life, and here
Saw nothing to regret, or there to fear;
From Nature's temperate feaſt roſe ſatisfy'd,
Thank'd Heaven that he liv'd, and that he dy'd.

The

The firſt couplet of this epitaph is borrowed from Craſhaw. The four next lines contain a ſpecies of praiſe peculiar, original, and juſt. Here, therefore the inſcription ſhould have ended, the latter part containing nothing but what is common to every man who is wiſe and good. The character of Fenton was ſo amiable, that I cannot forbear to wiſh for ſome poet or biographer to diſplay it more fully for the advantage of poſterity. If he did not ſtand in the firſt rank of genius, he may claim a place in the ſecond; and, whatever criticiſm may object to his writings, cenſure could find very little to blame in his life.

XI.

On Mr. GAY.

In Weſtminſter-Abbey, 1732.

Of manners gentle, of affections mild;
In wit, a man; ſimplicity, a child:
With native humour tempering virtuous rage,
Form'd to delight at once and laſh the age:
Above temptation, in a low eſtate,
And uncorrupted, ev'n among the Great:
A ſafe companion and an eaſy friend,
Unblam'd through life, lamented in thy end,
Theſe are thy honours! not that here thy buſt
Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy duſt;
But that the Worthy and the Good ſhall ſay,
Striking their penſive boſoms—Here lies GAY.

As Gay was the favourite of our author, this epitaph was probably written with an uncommon degree of attention; yet it is not more ſucceſsfully executed than the reſt, for it will not always happen

that the succefs of a poet is proportionate to his labour. The fame obfervation may be extended to all works of imagination, which are often influenced by caufes wholly out of the performer's power, by hints of which he perceives not the origin, by fudden elevations of mind which he cannot produce in himfelf, and which fometimes rife when he expects them leaft.

The two parts of the firft line are only echoes of each other; *gentle manners* and *mild affections*, if they mean any thing, muft mean the fame.

That Gay was a *man in wit* is a very frigid commendation; to have the wit of a man is not much for a poet. The *wit of man*, and the *fimplicity of a child*, make a poor and vulgar contraft, and raife no ideas of excellence, either intellectual or moral.

In the next couplet *rage* is lefs properly introduced after the mention of *mildnefs* and *gentlenefs*, which are made the conftituents of his character; for a man fo *mild* and *gentle* to *temper* his *rage*, was not difficult.

The next line is inharmonious in its found, and mean in its conception; the oppofition is obvious, and the word *lafh* ufed abfolutely, and without any modification, is grofs and improper.

To be *above temptation* in poverty, and *free from corruption among the Great*, is indeed fuch a peculiarity as deferved notice. But to be a *fafe companion* is a praife merely negative, arifing not from poffeffion of virtue, but the abfence of vice, and that one of the moft odious.

As little can be added to his character, by afferting that he was *lamented in his end*. Every man that

dies

dies is, at leaſt by the writer of his epitaph, ſuppoſed to be lamented, and therefore this general lamentation does no honour to Gay.

The firſt eight lines have no grammar; the adjectives are without any ſubſtantive, and the epithets without a ſubject.

The thought in the laſt line, that Gay is buried in the boſoms of the *worthy* and the *good*, who are diſtinguiſhed only to lengthen the line, is ſo dark that few underſtand it; and ſo harſh, when it is explained, that ſtill fewer approve.

XII.

Intended for Sir ISAAC NEWTON.
In Weſtminſter-Abbey.

ISAACUS NEWTONIUS:
Quem Immortalem
Teſtantur, *Tempus, Natura, Cœlum:*
Mortalem
Hoc marmor fatetur.

Nature, and Nature's laws, lay hid in night:
God ſaid, *Let Newton be!* And all was light.

Of this epitaph, ſhort as it is, the faults ſeem not to be very few. Why part ſhould be Latin, and part Engliſh, it is not eaſy to diſcover. In the Latin the oppoſition of *Immortalis* and *Mortalis*, is a mere ſound, or a mere quibble; he is not *immortal* in any ſenſe contrary to that in which he is *mortal.*

In the verſes the thought is obvious, and the words *night* and *light* are too nearly allied.

XIII.

On EDMUND *Duke of* BUCKINGHAM, *who died in the 19th Year of his Age*, 1735.

If modeſt youth, with cool reflection crown'd,
And every opening virtue blooming round,
Could ſave a parent's juſteſt pride from fate,
Or add one patriot to a ſinking ſtate;
This weeping marble had not aſk'd thy tear,
Or ſadly told how many hopes lie here!
The living virtue now had ſhone approv'd,
The ſenate heard him, and his country lov'd.
Yet ſofter honours, and leſs noiſy fame,
Attend the ſhade of gentle Buckingham:
In whom a race, for courage fam'd and art,
Ends in the milder merit of the heart:
And, chiefs or ſages long to Britain given,
Pays the laſt tribute of a ſaint to heaven.

This epitaph Mr. Warburton prefers to the reſt, but I know not for what reaſon. To *crown* with *reflection* is ſurely a mode of ſpeech approaching to nonſenſe. *Opening virtues blooming round*, is ſomething like tautology; the ſix following lines are poor and proſaick. *Art* is in another couplet uſed for *arts*, that a rhyme may be had to *heart*. The ſix laſt lines are the beſt, but not excellent.

The reſt of his ſepulchral performances hardly deſerve the notice of criticiſm. The contemptible "Dialogue" between HE and SHE ſhould have been ſuppreſſed for the author's ſake.

In his laſt epitaph on himſelf, in which he attempts to be jocular upon one of the few things that

that make wiſe men ſerious, he confounds the living man with the dead:

Under this ſtone, or under this ſill,
Or under this turf, &c.

When a man is once buried, the queſtion, under what he is buried, is eaſily decided. He forgot that though he wrote the epitaph in a ſtate of uncertainty, yet it could not be laid over him till his grave was made. Such is the folly of wit when it is ill employed.

The world has but little new; even this wretchedneſs ſeems to have been borrowed from the following tuneleſs Lines:

Ludovici Areoſti humantur oſſa
Sub hoc marmore, vel ſub hac humo, ſeu
Sub quicquid voluit benignus hæres
Sive hærede benignior comes, ſeu
Opportunius incidens Viator:
Nam ſcire haud potuit futura, ſed nec
Tanti erat vacuum ſibi cadaver
Ut utnam cuperet parare vivens,
Vivens iſta tamen ſibi paravit.
Quæ inſcribi voluit ſuo ſepulchro
Olim ſiquod haberetis ſepulchrum.

Surely Arioſto did not venture to expect that his trifle would have ever had ſuch an illuſtrious imitator.

PITT.

P I T T.

CHRISTOPHER PITT, of whom whatever I ſhall relate, more than has been already publiſhed, I owe to the kind communication of Dr. Warton, was born in 1699 at Blandford, the ſon of a phyſician much eſteemed.

He was, 1714, received as a ſcholar into Wincheſter College, where he was diſtinguiſhed by exerciſes of uncommon elegance, and, at his removal to New College in 1719, preſented to the electors, as the product of his private and voluntary ſtudies, a complete verſion of Lucan's poem, which he did not then know to have been tranſlated by Rowe.

This is an inſtance of early diligence which well deſerves to be recorded. The ſuppreſſion of ſuch a work, recommended by ſuch uncommon circumſtances, is to be regretted. It is indeed culpable, to load libraries with ſuperfluous books; but incitements to early excellence are never ſuperfluous, and from this example the danger is not great of many imitations.

When he had reſided at his college three years, he was preſented to the rectory of Pinpern in Dorſetſhire (1722), by his relation, Mr. Pitt of Stratfieldſea in Hampſhire; and, reſigning his fellowſhip, continued at Oxford two years longer, till he became Maſter of Arts (1724).

He probably about this time tranſlated "Vida's "Art of Poetry," which Triſtram's ſplendid edition had

had then made popular. In this tranſlation he diſtinguiſhed himſelf, both by its general elegance, and by the ſkilful adaptation of his numbers to the images expreſſed; a beauty which Vida has with great ardour enforced and exemplified.

He then retired to his living, a place very pleaſing by its ſituation, and therefore likely to excite the imagination of a poet; where he paſſed the reſt of his life, reverenced for his virtue, and beloved for the ſoftneſs of his temper and the eaſineſs of his manners. Before ſtrangers he had ſomething of the ſcholar's timidity or diſtruſt; but when he became familiar he was in a very high degree cheerful and entertaining. His general benevolence procured general reſpect; and he paſſed a life placid and honourable, neither too great for the kindneſs of the low, nor too low for the notice of the great.

AT what time he compoſed his miſcellany, publiſhed in 1727, it is not eaſy or neceſſary to know: thoſe which have dates appear to have been very early productions, and I have not obſerved that any riſe above mediocrity.

The ſucceſs of his Vida animated him to a higher undertaking; and in his thirtieth year he publiſhed a verſion of the firſt book of the Eneid. This being, I ſuppoſe, commended by his friends, he ſome time afterwards added three or four more; with an advertiſement, in which he repreſents himſelf as tranſlating with great indifference, and with a progreſs of which himſelf was hardly conſcious. This can hardly be true, and, if true, is nothing to the reader.

At laſt, without any further contention with his modeſty, or any awe of the name of Dryden, he

gave us a complete English Eneid, which I am ſorry not to ſee joined in this publication with his other poems *. It would have been pleaſing to have an opportunity of comparing the two beſt tranſlations that perhaps were ever produced by one nation of the ſame author.

Pitt engaging as a rival with Dryden, naturally obſerved his failures, and avoided them; and, as he wrote after Pope's Iliad, he had an example of an exact, equable, and ſplendid verſification. With theſe advantages, ſeconded by great diligence, he might ſucceſsfully labour particular paſſages, and eſcape many errors. If the two verſions are compared, perhaps the reſult would be, that Dryden leads the reader forward by his general vigour and ſprightlineſs, and Pitt often ſtops him to contemplate the excellence of a ſingle couplet; that Dryden's faults are forgotten in the hurry of delight, and that Pitt's beauties are neglected in the languor of a cold and liſtleſs peruſal; that Pitt pleaſes the criticks, and Dryden the people; that Pitt is quoted, and Dryden read.

He did not long enjoy the reputation which this great work deſervedly conferred; for he left the world in 1748, and lies buried under a ſtone at Blandford, on which is this inſcription:

In Memory of
CHR. PITT, clerk, M. A.
Very eminent
for his talents in poetry;
and yet more
for the univerſal candour of
his mind, and the primitive
ſimplicity of his manners.
He lived innocent,
and died beloved,
Apr. 13, 1748,
aged 48.

* It is added to the late edition. R.

THOMSON.

JAMES THOMSON, the ſon of a miniſter well eſteemed for his piety and diligence, was born September 7, 1700, at Ednam, in the ſhire of Roxburgh, of which his father was paſtor. His mother, whoſe name was Hume, inherited as co-heireſs a portion of a ſmall eſtate. The revenue of a pariſh in Scotland is ſeldom large; and it was probably in commiſeration of the difficulty with which Mr. Thomſon ſupported his family, having nine childen, that Mr. Riccarton, a neighbouring miniſter, diſcovering in James uncommon promiſes of future excellence, undertook to ſuperintend his education, and provide him books.

He was taught the common rudiments of learning at the ſchool of Jedburg, a place which he delights to recollect in his poem of "Autumn;" but was not conſidered by his maſter as ſuperior to common boys, though in thoſe early days he amuſed his patron and his friends with poetical compoſitions; with which, however, he ſo little pleaſed himſelf, that on every new-year's day he threw into the fire all the productions of the foregoing year.

From the ſchool he was removed to Edinburgh, where he had not reſided two years when his father died,

died, and left all his children to the care of their mother, who raiſed upon her little eſtate what money a mortgage could afford, and, removing with her family to Edinburgh, lived to ſee her ſon riſing into eminence.

The deſign of Thomſon's friends was to breed him a miniſter. He lived at Edinburgh, at a ſchool, without diſtinction or expectation, till, at the uſual time, he performed a probationary exerciſe by explaining a pſalm. His diction was ſo poetically ſplendid, that Mr. Hamilton, the profeſſor of Divinity, reproved him for ſpeaking language unintelligible to a popular audience; and he cenſured one of his expreſſions as indecent, if not profane.

This rebuke is reported to have repreſſed his thoughts of an eccleſiaſtical character, and he probably cultivated with new diligence his bloſſoms of poetry, which, however, were in ſome danger of a blaſt; for, ſubmitting his productions to ſome who thought themſelves qualified to criticiſe, he heard of nothing but faults; but, finding other judges more favourable, he did not ſuffer himſelf to ſink into deſpondence.

He eaſily diſcovered that the only ſtage on which a poet could appear, with any hope of advantage, was London; a place too wide for the operation of petty competition and private malignity, where merit might ſoon become conſpicuous, and would find friends as ſoon as it became reputable to befriend it. A lady who was acquainted with his mother, adviſed him to the journey, and promiſed ſome countenance or aſſiſtance, which at laſt he

never

never received; however, he juſtified his adventure by her encouragement, and came to ſeek in London patronage and fame.

At his arrival he found his way to Mr. Mallet, then tutor to the ſons of the duke of Montroſe. He had recommendations to ſeveral perſons of conſequence, which he had tied up carefully in his handkerchief; but as he paſſed along the ſtreet, with the gaping curioſity of a new-comer, his attention was upon every thing rather than his pocket, and his magazine of credentials was ſtolen from him.

His firſt want was a pair of ſhoes. For the ſupply of all his neceſſities, his whole fund was his "Winter," which for a time could find no purchaſer; till, at laſt, Mr. Millan was perſuaded to buy it at a low price; and this low price he had for ſome time reaſon to regret; but, by accident, Mr. Whatley, a man not wholly unknown among authors, happening to turn his eye upon it, was ſo delighted that he ran from place to place celebrating its excellence. Thomſon obtained likewiſe the notice of Aaron Hill, whom, being friendleſs and indigent, and glad of kindneſs, he courted with every expreſſion of ſervile adulation.

"Winter" was dedicated to Sir Spencer Compton, but attracted no regard from him to the author; till Aaron Hill awakened his attention by ſome verſes addreſſed to Thomſon, and publiſhed in one of the newſpapers, which cenſured the great for their neglect of ingenious men. Thomſon then received a preſent of twenty guineas, of which he gives this account to Mr. Hill:

"I hinted

“I hinted to you in my laſt, that on Saturday “morning I was with Sir Spencer Compton. A “certain gentleman, without my deſire, ſpoke to “him concerning me: his anſwer was, that I had “never come near him. Then the gentleman put “the queſtion, If he deſired that I ſhould wait on “him? He returned, he did. On this, the gen-“tleman gave me an introductory Letter to him. “He received me in what they commonly call a “civil manner; aſked me ſome common-place “queſtions; and made me a preſent of twenty “guineas. I am very ready to own that the preſent “was larger than my performance deſerved; and “ſhall aſcribe it to his generoſity, or any other “cauſe, rather than the merit of the addreſs.”

The poem, which, being of a new kind, few would venture at firſt to like, by degrees gained upon the publick; and one edition was very ſpeedily ſucceeded by another.

Thomſon's credit was now high, and every day brought him new friends; among others Dr. Rundle, a man afterwards unfortunately famous, ſought his acquaintance, and found his qualities ſuch, that he recommended him to the Lord Chancellor Talbot.

“Winter” was accompanied, in many editions, not only with a preface and dedication, but with poetical praiſes by Mr. Hill, Mr. Mallet (then Malloch), and Mira, the fictitious name of a lady once too well known. Why the dedications are, to “Winter” and the other Seaſons, contrarily to cuſtom,

custom, left out in the collected works, the reader may enquire.

The next year (1727) he distinguished himself by three publications; of "Summer," in pursuance of his plan; of "A Poem on the Death of Sir Isaac "Newton," which he was enabled to perform as an exact philosopher by the instruction of Mr. Gray; and of "Britannia," a kind of poetical invective against the ministry, whom the nation then thought not forward enough in resenting the depredations of the Spaniards. By this piece he declared himself an adherent to the opposition, and had therefore no favour to expect from the Court.

Thomson, having been some time entertained in the family of the lord Binning, was desirous of testifying his gratitude by making him the patron of his "Summer;" but the same kindness which had first disposed lord Binning to encourage him, determined him to refuse the dedication, which was by his advice addressed to Mr. Dodington, a man who had more power to advance the reputation and fortune of a poet.

"Spring" was published next year, with a dedication to the Countess of Hertford; whose practice it was to invite every summer some poet into the country, to hear her verses and assist her studies. This honour was one summer conferred on Thomson, who took more delight in carousing with lord Hertford and his friends than assisting her ladyship's poetical operations, and therefore never received another summons.

"Autumn," the season to which the "Spring" and "Summer" are preparatory, still remained unsung, and

and was delayed till he published (1730) his works collected.

He produced in 1727 the tragedy of "Sophonisba," which raised such expectation, that every rehearsal was dignified with a splendid audience, collected to anticipate the delight that was preparing for the publick. It was observed, however, that nobody was much affected, and that the company rose as from a moral lecture.

It had upon the stage no unusual degree of Success. Slight accidents will operate upon the taste of pleasure. There is a feeble line in the play:

O Sophonisba, Sophonisba, O!

This gave occasion to a waggish parody:

O, Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy Thomson, O!

which for a while was echoed through the town.

I have been told by Savage, that of the Prologue to "Sophonisba" the first part was written by Pope, who could not be persuaded to finish it; and that the concluding lines were added by Mallet.

Thomson was not long afterwards, by the influence of Dr. Rundle, sent to travel with Mr. Charles Talbot, the eldest son of the Chancellor. He was yet young enough to receive new impressions, to have his opinions rectified, and his views enlarged; nor can he be supposed to have wanted that curiosity which is inseparable from an active and comprehensive mind. He may therefore now be supposed to have reveled in all the joys of intellectual luxury; he was every day feasted with instructive novelties; he lived splendidly without expence; and might

expect when he returned home a certain establishment.

At this time a long course of opposition to Sir Robert Walpole had filled the nation with clamours for liberty, of which no man felt the want, and with care for liberty, which was not in danger. Thomson, in his travels on the Continent, found or fancied so many evils arising from the tyranny of other governments, that he resolved to write a very long poem, in five parts, upon Liberty.

While he was busy on the first book, Mr. Talbot died; and Thomson, who had been rewarded for his attendance by the place of secretary of the Briefs, pays in the initial lines a decent tribute to his memory.

Upon this great poem two years were spent, and the author congratulated himself upon it as his noblest work; but an author and his reader are not always of a mind. Liberty called in vain upon her votaries to read her praises, and reward her encomiast: her praises were condemned to harbour spiders, and to gather dust: none of Thomson's performances were so little regarded.

The judgement of the publick was not erroneous; the recurrence of the same images must tire in time; an enumeration of examples to prove a position which nobody denied, as it was from the beginning superfluous, must quickly grow disgusting.

The poem of "Liberty" does not now appear in its original state; but, when the author's works were collected after his death, was shortened by Sir George Lyttleton, with a liberty which, as it has a manifest tendency to lessen the confidence of society, and to confound the characters of authors, by making one

man write by the judgement of another, cannot be juſtified by any ſuppoſed propriety of the alteration, or kindneſs of the friend.—I wiſh to ſee it exhibited as its author left it.

Thomſon now lived in eaſe and plenty, and ſeems for a while to have ſuſpended his poetry; but he was ſoon called back to labour by the death of the Chancellor, for his place then became vacant; and though the lord Hardwicke delayed for ſome time to give it away, Thomſon's baſhfulneſs or pride, or ſome other motive perhaps not more laudable, withheld him from ſoliciting; and the new Chancellor would not give him what he would not aſk.

He now relapſed to his former indigence; but the Prince of Wales was at that time ſtruggling for popularity, and by the influence of Mr. Lyttelton profeſſed himſelf the patron of wit; to him Thomſon was introduced, and being gaily interrogated about the ſtate of his affairs, ſaid, "that they were "in a more poetical poſture than formerly;" and had a penſion allowed him of one hundred pounds a year.

Being now obliged to write, he produced (1738) the tragedy of Agamemnon, which was much ſhortened in the repreſentation. It had the fate which moſt commonly attends mythological ſtories, and was only endured, but not favoured. It ſtruggled with ſuch difficulty through the firſt night, that Thomſon, coming late to his friends with whom he was to ſup, excuſed his delay by telling them how the ſweat of his diſtreſs had ſo diſordered his wig, that he could not come till he had been refitted by a barber.

He

He ſo intereſted himſelf in his own drama, that, if I remember right, as he ſat in the upper gallery, he accompanied the players by audible recitation, till a friendly hint frighted him to ſilence. Pope countenanced "Agamemnon," by coming to it the firſt night, and was welcomed to the theatre by a general clap; he had much regard for Thomſon, and once expreſſed it in a poetical Epiſtle ſent to Italy, of which however he abated the value, by tranſplanting ſome of the lines into his Epiſtle to "Arbuthnot."

About this time the Act was paſſed for licenſing plays, of which the firſt operation was the prohibition of "Guſtavus Vaſa," a tragedy of Mr. Brooke whom the publick recompenſed by a very liberal ſubſcription; the next was the refuſal of "Edward "and Eleonora," offered by Thomſon. It is hard to diſcover why either play ſhould have been obſtructed. Thomſon likewiſe endeavoured to repair his loſs by a ſubſcription, of which I cannot now tell the ſucceſs.

When the publick murmured at the unkind treatment of Thomſon, one of the miniſterial writers remarked, that "he had taken a *Liberty* which was "not agreeable to *Britannia* in any *Seaſon*."

He was ſoon after employed, in conjunction with Mr. Mallet, to write the maſque of "Alfred," which was acted before the Prince at Cliefden-houſe.

His next work (1745) was "Tancred and Sigiſ-"munda," the moſt ſucceſsful of all his tragedies; for it ſtill keeps its turn upon the ſtage. It may be doubted whether he was, either by the bent of nature or habits of ſtudy, much qualified for tragedy. It does not appear that he had much ſenſe of the pa-

 thetick;

thetick; and his diffusive and descriptive style produced declamation rather than dialogue.

His friend Mr. Lyttelton was now in power, and conferred upon him the office of surveyor-general of the Leeward Islands; from which, when his deputy was paid, he received about three hundred pounds a year.

The last piece that he lived to publish was the "Castle of Indolence," which was many years under his hand, but was at last finished with great accuracy. The first canto opens a scene of lazy luxury that fills the imagination.

He was now at ease, but was not long to enjoy it; for, by taking cold on the water between London and Kew, he caught a disorder, which, with some careless exasperation, ended in a fever that put an end to his life, August 27, 1748. He was buried in the church of Richmond, without an inscription; but a monument has been erected to his memory in Westminster-abbey.

Thomson was of stature above the middle size, and "more fat than bard beseems," of a dull countenance, and a gross, unanimated, uninviting appearance; silent in mingled company, but chearful among select friends, and by his friends very tenderly and warmly beloved.

He left behind him the tragedy of "Coriolanus," which was, by the zeal of his patron Sir George Lyttelton, brought upon the stage for the benefit of his family, and recommended by a Prologue, which Quin, who had long lived with Thomson in fond intimacy, spoke in such a manner as shewed him "to be," on that occasion, "no actor." The commencement

mencement of this benevolence is very honourable to Quin; who is reported to have delivered Thomſon, then known to him only for his genius, from an arreſt by a very conſiderable preſent; and its continuance is honourable to both; for friendſhip is not always the ſequel of obligation. By this tragedy a conſiderable ſum was raiſed, of which part diſcharged his debts, and the reſt was remitted to his ſiſters, whom, however removed from them by place or condition, he regarded with great tenderneſs, as will appear by the following Letter, which I communicate with much pleaſure, as it gives me at once an opportunity of recording the fraternal kindneſs of Thomſon, and reflecting on the friendly aſſiſtance of Mr. Boſwell, from whom I received it.

"Hagley in Worceſterſhire,
"October the 4th, 1747.

"My dear Siſter,

"I thought you had known me better than to "interpret my ſilence into a decay of affection, "eſpecially as your behaviour has always been ſuch "as rather to increaſe than diminiſh it. Don't "imagine, becauſe I am a bad correſpondent, that "I can ever prove an unkind friend and brother. "I muſt do myſelf the juſtice to tell you, that my "affections are naturally very fixed and conſtant; "and if I had ever reaſon of complaint againſt you "(of which by the bye I have not the leaſt ſhadow), I "am conſcious of ſo many defects in myſelf, as diſ"poſe me to be not a little charitable and forgiving.

"It gives me the trueſt heart-felt ſatisfaction to "hear you have a good, kind huſband, and are in

" easy, contented circumstances; but were they " otherwise, that would only awaken and heighten " my tenderness towards you. As our good and " tender-hearted parents did not live to receive " any material testimonies of that highest human " gratitude I owed them (than which nothing " could have given me equal pleasure), the " only return I can make them now is by kind-" ness to those they left behind them. Would to " God poor Lizy had lived longer, to have been " a farther witness of the truth of what I say, and " that I might have had the pleasure of seeing once " more a sister who so truly deserved my esteem " and love! But she is happy, while we must toil " a little longer here below: let us however do it " chearfully and gratefully, supported by the plea-" sing hope of meeting you again on a safer shore, " where to recollect the storms and difficulties " of life will not perhaps be inconsistent with " that blissful state. You did right to call your " daughter by her name: for you must needs have " had a particular tender friendship for one ano-" ther, endeared as you were by nature, by ha-" ving passed the affectionate years of your youth " together; and by that great softener and engager " of hearts, mutual hardship. That it was in my " power to ease it a little, I account one of the " most exquisite pleasures of my life.—But enough " of this melancholy, though not unpleasing strain.

" I esteem you for your sensible and disinterested " advice to Mr. Bell, as you will see by my Letter " to him; as I approve entirely of his marrying again,

"you may readily aſk me why I don't marry at all. "My circumſtances have hitherto been ſo variable "and uncertain in this fluctuating world, as induce "to keep me from engaging in ſuch a ſtate: and "now, though they are more ſettled, and of late "(which you will be glad to hear) conſiderably im- "proved, I begin to think myſelf too far advanced "in life for ſuch youthful undertakings, not to men- "tion ſome other petty reaſons that are apt to ſtartle "the delicacy of difficult old batchelors. I am, how- "ever, not a little ſuſpicious that, was I to pay a "viſit to Scotland (which I have ſome thought of "doing ſoon), I might poſſibly be tempted to think "of a thing not eaſily repaired if done amiſs. I have "always been of opinion, that none make better "wives than the ladies of Scotland; and yet, who "more forſaken than they, while the gentlemen are "continually running abroad all the world over? "Some of them, it is true, are wiſe enough to re- "turn for a wife. You ſee I am beginning to make "intereſt already with the Scots ladies.—But no "more of this infectious ſubject.—Pray let me hear "from you now and then; and though I am not a "regular correſpondent, yet perhaps I may mend in "that reſpect. Remember me kindly to your huſ- "band, and believe me to be

"Your moſt affectionate brother,

"JAMES THOMSON."

(Addreſſed) "To Mrs. Thomſon in Lanark."

The

The benevolence of Thomſon was fervid, but not active; he would give on all occaſions what aſſiſtance his purſe would ſupply; but the offices of intervention or ſolicitation he could not conquer his ſluggiſhneſs ſufficiently to perform. The affairs of others, however, were not more neglected than his own. He had often felt the inconveniences of idleneſs, but he never cured it; and was ſo conſcious of his own character, that he talked of writing an Eaſtern Tale "of "the Man who loved to be in Diſtreſs."

Among his peculiarities was a very unſkilful and inarticulate manner of pronouncing any lofty or ſolemn compoſition. He was once reading to Dodington, who, being himſelf a reader eminently elegant, was ſo much provoked by his odd utterance, that he ſnatched the paper from his hands, and told him that he did not underſtand his own verſes.

The biographer of Thomſon has remarked, that an author's life is beſt read in his works: his obſervation was not well-timed. Savage, who lived much with Thomſon, once told me, how he heard a lady remarking that ſhe could gather from his works three parts of his character, that he was a "great Lover, a great "Swimmer, and rigourouſly abſtinent;" but, ſaid Savage, he knows not any love but that of the ſex; he was perhaps never in cold water in his life; and he indulges himſelf in all the luxury that comes within his reach. Yet Savage always ſpoke with the moſt eager praiſe of his ſocial qualities, his warmth and conſtancy of friendſhip, and his adherence to his firſt acquaintance when the advancement of his reputation had left them behind him.

As a writer, he is entitled to one praiſe of the higheſt kind: his mode of thinking, and of expreſſing his thoughts, is original. His blank verſe is no more the blank verſe of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauſes, his diction, are of his own growth, without tranſcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius; he looks round on Nature and on Life with the eye which Nature beſtows only on a poet; the eye that diſtinguiſhes, in every thing preſented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vaſt, and attends to the minute. The reader of the "Seaſons" wonders that he never ſaw before what Thomſon ſhews him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomſon impreſſes.

His is one of the works in which blank verſe ſeems properly uſed. Thomſon's wide expanſion of general views, and his enumeration of circumſtantial varieties, would have been obſtructed and embarraſſed by the frequent interſection of the ſenſe, which are the neceſſary effects of rhyme.

His deſcriptions of extended ſcenes and general effects bring before us the whole magnificence of Nature, whether pleaſing or dreadful. The gaiety of Spring, the ſplendour of Summer, the tranquillity of Autumn, and the horror of Winter, take in their turns poſſeſſion of the mind. The poet leads us through the appearances of things as they are ſucceſſively varied by the viciſſitudes of the year, and imparts to

us ſo much of his own enthuſiaſm, that our thoughts expand with his imagery, and kindle with his ſentiments. Nor is the naturaliſt without his part in the entertainment; for he is aſſiſted to recollect and to combine, to range his diſcoveries, and to amplify the ſphere of his contemplation.

The great defect of the "Seaſons" is want of method; but for this I know not that there was any remedy. Of many appearances ſubſiſting all at once, no rule can be given why one ſhould be mentioned before another; yet the memory wants the help of order, and the curioſity is not excited by ſuſpence or expectation.

His diction is in the higheſt degree florid and luxuriant, ſuch as may be ſaid to be to his images and thoughts "both their luſtre and their ſhade;" ſuch as inveſt them with ſplendour, through which perhaps they are not always eaſily diſcerned. It is too exuberant, and ſometimes may be charged with filling the ear more than the mind.

Theſe Poems, with which I was acquainted at their firſt appearance, I have ſince found altered and enlarged by ſubſequent reviſals, as the author ſuppoſed his judgement to grow more exact, and as books or converſation extended his knowledge and opened his proſpects. They are, I think, improved in general; yet I know not whether they have not loſt part of what Temple calls their "race;" a word which, applied to wines in its primitive ſenſe, means the flavour of the ſoil.

"Liberty," when it firſt appeared, I tried to read, and ſoon deſiſted. I have never tried again,

and

and therefore will not hazard either praiſe or cenſure.

The higheſt praiſe which he has received ought not to be ſuppreſt: it is ſaid by Lord Lyttelton, in the Prologue to his poſthumous play, that his works contained

No line which, dying, he could wiſh to blot.

WATTS.

W A T T S.

THE Poems of Dr. WATTS were by my recommendation inserted in the late Collection; the readers of which are to impute to me whatever pleasure or weariness they may find in the perusal of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden.

ISAAC WATTS was born July 17, 1674, at Southampton, when his father, of the same name, kept a boarding-school for young gentlemen, though common report makes him a shoemaker. He appears, from the narrative of Dr. Gibbons, to have been neither indigent nor illiterate.

Isaac, the eldest of nine children, was given to books from his infancy; and began, we are told, to learn Latin when he was four years old, I suppose, at home. He was afterwards taught Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, by Mr. Pinhorne, a clergyman, master of the Free-school at Southampton, to whom the gratitude of his scholar afterwards inscribed a Latin ode.

His proficiency at school was so conspicuous, that a subscription was proposed for his support at the University; but he declared his resolution of taking his lot with the Dissenters. Such he was as every Christian Church would rejoice to have adopted.

He therefore repaired, in 1690, to an academy taught by Mr. Rowe, where he had for his companions and fellow-students Mr. Hughes the poet, and Dr. Horte, afterwards Archbishop of Tuam. Some Latin Essays, supposed to have been written as exercises at this academy, shew a degree of knowledge, both philosophical and theological, such as very few attain by a much longer course of study.

He was, as he hints in his Miscellanies, a maker of verses from fifteen to fifty, and in his youth he appears to have paid attention to Latin poetry. His verses to his brother, in the *glyconick* measure, written when he was seventeen, are remarkably easy and elegant. Some of his other odes are deformed by the Pindarick folly then prevailing, and are written with such neglect of all metrical rules as is without example among the ancients; but his diction, though perhaps not always exactly pure, has such copiousness and splendour, as shews that he was but a very little distance from excellence.

His method of study was to impress the contents of his books upon his memory by abridging them, and by interleaving them to amplify one system with supplements from another.

With the congregation of his tutor Mr. Rowe, who were, I believe, Independents, he communicated in his nineteenth year.

At the age of twenty he left the academy, and ſpent two years in ſtudy and devotion at the houſe of his father, who treated him with great tenderneſs; and had the happineſs, indulged to few parents, of living to ſee his ſon eminent for literature, and venerable for piety.

He was then entertained by Sir John Hartopp five years, as domeſtick tutor to his ſon: and in that time particularly devoted himſelf to the ſtudy of the Holy Scriptures; and, being choſen aſſiſtant to Dr. Chauncey, preached the firſt time on the birth-day that completed his twenty-fourth year; probably conſidering that as the day of a ſecond nativity, by which he entered on a new period of exiſtence.

In about three years he ſucceeded Dr. Chauncey; but, ſoon after his entrance on his charge, he was ſeized by a dangerous illneſs, which ſunk him to ſuch weakneſs, that the congregation thought an aſſiſtant neceſſary, and appointed Mr. Price. His health then returned gradually; and he performed his duty, till (1712) he was ſeized by a fever of ſuch violence and continuance, that, from the feebleneſs which it brought upon him, he never perfectly recovered.

This calamitous ſtate made the compaſſion of his friends neceſſary, and drew upon him the attention of Sir Thomas Abney, who received him into his houſe; where, with a conſtancy of friendſhip and uniformity of conduct not often to be found, he was treated for thirty-ſix years with all the kindneſs that friendſhip could prompt, and all the attention that reſpect could dictate. Sir Thomas died about eight years afterwards; but he continued with the lady

and

and her daughters to the end of his life. The lady died about a year after him.

A coalition like this, a ſtate in which the notions of patronage and dependence were overpowered by the perception of reciprocal benefits, deſerves a particular memorial; and I will not withhold from the reader Dr. Gibbons's repreſentation, to which regard is to be paid as to the narrative of one who writes what he knows, and what is known likewiſe to multitudes beſides.

" Our next obſervation ſhall be made upon that " remarkably kind Providence which brought the " Doctor into Sir Thomas Abney's family, and con- " tinued him there till his death, a period of no " leſs than thirty-ſix years. In the midſt of his " ſacred labours for the glory of God, and good of " his generation, he is ſeized with a moſt violent and " threatening fever, which leaves him oppreſſed with " great weakneſs, and puts a ſtop at leaſt to his pub- " lick ſervices for four years. In this diſtreſſing ſeaſon, " doubly ſo to his active and pious ſpirit, he is in- " vited to Sir Thomas Abney's family, nor ever re- " moves from it till he had finiſhed his days. Here " he enjoyed the uninterrupted demonſtrations of the " trueſt friendſhip. Here, without any care of his " own, he had every thing which could contribute " to the enjoyment of life, and favour the unwearied " purſuits of his ſtudies. Here he dwelt in a family, " which for piety, order, harmony, and every vir- " tue, was an houſe of God. Here he had the pri- " vilege of a country receſs, the fragrant bower, the " ſpreading lawn, the flowery garden, and other ad-

"vantages, to sooth his mind and aid his restoration "to health; to yield him, whenever he chose them, "most grateful intervals from his laborious studies, "and enable him to return to them with redoubled "vigour and delight. Had it not been for this most "happy event, he might, as to outward view, have "feebly, it may be painfully, dragged on through "many more years of languor, and inability for pub-"lick service, and even for profitable study, or per-"haps might have sunk into his grave under the "overwhelming load of infirmities in the midst of "his days; and thus the church and world would "have been deprived of those many excellent sermons "and works, which he drew up and published du-"ring his long residence in this family. In a few "years after his coming hither, Sir Thomas Abney "dies; but his amiable consort survives, who shews "the Doctor the same respect and friendship as be-"fore, and most happily for him and great numbers "besides; for, as her riches were great, her genero-"sity and munificence were in full proportion; her "thread of life was drawn out to a great age, even "beyond that of the Doctor's; and thus this excel-"lent man, through her kindness, and that of her "daughter, the present Mrs. Elizabeth Abney, who "in a like degree esteemed and honoured him, en-"joyed all the benefits and felicities he expe-"rienced at his first entrance into this family, till his "days were numbered and finished; and, like "a shock of corn in its season, he ascended into "the regions of perfect and immortal life and "joy."

If

If this quotation has appeared long, let it be considered that it comprises an account of six-and-thirty years, and those the years of Dr. Watts.

From the time of his reception into this family, his life was no otherwise diversified than by successive publications. The series of his works I am not able to deduce; their number and their variety shew the intenseness of his industry, and the extent of his capacity.

He was one of the first authors that taught the Dissenters to court attention by the graces of language. Whatever they had among them before, whether of learning or acuteness, was commonly obscured and blunted by coarseness and inelegance of style. He shewed them, that zeal and purity might be expressed and enforced by polished diction.

He continued to the end of his life a teacher of a congregation; and no reader of his works can doubt his fidelity or diligence. In the pulpit, though his low stature, which very little exceeded five feet, graced him with no advantages of appearance, yet the gravity and propriety of his utterance made his discourses very efficacious. I once mentioned the reputation which Mr. Foster had gained by his proper delivery to my friend Dr. Hawkesworth, who told me, that in the art of pronunciation he was far inferior to Dr. Watts.

Such was his flow of thoughts, and such his promptitude of language, that in the latter part of his life he did not precompose his cursory sermons, but having adjusted the heads, and sketched out some particulars, trusted for success to his extemporary powers.

He did not endeavour to aſſiſt his eloquence by any geſticulations; for, as no corporeal actions have any correſpondence with theological truth, he did not ſee how they could enforce it.

At the concluſion of weighty ſentences he gave time, by a ſhort pauſe, for the proper impreſſion.

To ſtated and publick inſtruction he added familiar viſits and perſonal application, and was careful to improve the opportunities which converſation offered of diffuſing and increaſing the influence of religion.

By his natural temper he was quick of reſentment; but by his eſtabliſhed and habitual practice he was gentle, modeſt, and inoffenſive. His tenderneſs appeared in his attention to children, and to the poor. To the poor, while he lived in the family of his friend, he allowed the third part of his annual revenue, though the whole was not a hundred a year; and for children he condeſcended to lay aſide the ſcholar, the philoſopher, and the wit, to write little poems of devotion, and ſyſtems of inſtruction, adapted to their wants and capacities, from the dawn of reaſon through its gradations of advance in the morning of life. Every man, acquainted with the common principles of human action, will look with veneration on the writer, who is at one time combating Locke, and at another making a catechiſm for children in their fourth year. A voluntary deſcent from the dignity of ſcience is perhaps the hardeſt leſſon that humility can teach.

As his mind was capacious, his curioſity excurſive, and his induſtry continual, his writings are very numerous, and his ſubjects various. With his

theo-

theological works I am only enough acquainted to admire his meeknefs of oppofition, and his mildnefs of cenfure. It was not only in his book, but in his mind, that *orthodoxy* was *united* with *charity*.

Of his philofophical pieces, his Logick has been received into the univerfities, and therefore wants no private recommendation: if he owes part of it to Le Clerc, it muft be confidered that no man, who undertakes merely to methodife or illuftrate a fyftem, pretends to be its author.

In his metaphyfical difquifitions, it was obferved by the late learned Mr. Dyer, that he confounded the idea of *fpace* with that of *empty fpace*, and did not confider that though fpace might be without matter, yet matter being extended could not be without fpace.

Few books have been perufed by me with greater pleafure than his "Improvement of the Mind," of which the radical principle may indeed be found in Locke's "Conduct of the Underftanding," but they are fo expanded and ramified by Watts, as to confer upon him the merit of a work in the higheft degree ufeful and pleafing. Whoever has the care of inftructing others may be charged with deficience in his duty if this book is not recommended.

I have mentioned his treatifes of Theology as diftinct from his other productions; but the truth is, that whatever he took in hand was, by his inceffant folicitude for fouls, converted to Theology. As piety predominated in his mind, it is diffufed over his works: under his direction it may be truly faid, *Theologiæ Philofophia ancillatur*, philofophy is fubfervient to evangelical inftruction: it is difficult to read

a page without learning, or at leaſt wiſhing, to be better. The attention is caught by indirect inſtruction, and he, that ſat down only to reaſon, is on a ſudden compelled to pray.

It was therefore with great propriety that, in 1728, he received from Edinburgh and Aberdeen an unſolicited diploma, by which he became a Doctor of Divinity. Academical honours would have more value, if they were always beſtowed with equal judgement.

He continued many years to ſtudy and to preach, and to do good by his inſtruction and example; till at laſt the infirmities of age diſabled him from the more laborious part of his miniſterial functions, and, being no longer capable of publick duty, he offered to remit the ſalary appendant to it; but his congregation would not accept the reſignation.

By degrees his weakneſs increaſed, and at laſt confined him to his chamber and his bed; where he was worn gradually away without pain, till he expired Nov. 25, 1748, in the ſeventy-fifth year of his age.

Few men have left behind ſuch purity of character, or ſuch monuments of laborious piety. He has provided inſtruction for all ages, from thoſe who are liſping their firſt leſſons, to the enlightened readers of Malbranche and Locke; he has left neither corporeal nor ſpiritual nature unexamined; he has taught the Art of Reaſoning, and the Science of the Stars.

His character, therefore, muſt be formed from the multiplicity and diverſity of his attainments, rather than from any ſingle performance; for it would not

be ſafe to claim for him the higheſt rank in any ſingle denomination of literary dignity; yet perhaps there was nothing in which he would not have excelled, if he had not divided his powers to different purſuits.

As a poet, had he been only a poet, he would probably have ſtood high among the authors with whom he is now aſſociated. For his judgement was exact, and he noted beauties and faults with very nice diſcernment; his imagination, as the "Dacian Battle" proves, was vigorous and active, and the ſtores of knowledge were large by which his fancy was to be ſupplied. His ear was well-tuned, and his diction was elegant and copious. But his devotional poetry is, like that of others, unſatisfactory. The paucity of its topicks enforces perpetual repetition, and the ſanctity of the matter rejects the ornaments of figurative diction. It is ſufficient for Watts to have done better than others what no man has done well.

His poems on other ſubjects ſeldom riſe higher than might be expected from the amuſements of a Man of Letters, and have different degrees of value as they are more or leſs laboured, or as the occaſion was more or leſs favourable to invention.

He writes too often without regular meaſures, and too often in blank verſe: the rhymes are not always ſufficiently correſpondent. He is particularly unhappy in coining names expreſſive of characters. His lines are commonly ſmooth and eaſy, and his thoughts always religiouſly pure; but who is there that, to ſo much piety and innocence, does not wiſh

for a greater meaſure of ſprightlineſs and vigour! He is at leaſt one of the few poets with whom youth and ignorance may be ſafely pleaſed: and happy will be that reader whoſe mind is diſpoſed by his verſes, or his proſe, to imitate him in all but his non-conformity, to copy his benevolence to man, and his reverence to God.

A. PHILIPS.

A. PHILIPS.

OF the birth or early part of the life of AMBROSE PHILIPS I have not been able to find any account. His academical education he received at St. John's College in Cambridge, where he firſt ſolicited the notice of the world by ſome Engliſh verſes, in the collection publiſhed by the Univerſity on the death of Queen Mary.

From this time how he was employed, or in what ſtation he paſſed his life, is not yet diſcovered. He muſt have publiſhed his Paſtorals before the year 1708, becauſe they are evidently prior to thoſe of Pope.

He afterwards (1709) addreſſed to the univerſal patron, the Duke of Dorſet, a "poetical Letter from "Copenhagen," which was publiſhed in the "Tat-"ler," and is by Pope in one of his firſt letters mentioned with high praiſe, as the production of a man "who could write very nobly."

Philips was a zealous Whig, and therefore eaſily found acceſs to Addiſon and Steele; but his ardour ſeems not to have procured him any thing more than

kind words; ſince he was reduced to tranſlate the "Perſian Tales" for Tonſon, for which he was afterwards reproached, with this addition of contempt, that he worked for half-a-crown. The book is divided into many ſections, for each of which if he received half-a-crown, his reward, as writers then were paid, was very liberal; but half-a-crown had a mean ſound.

He was employed in promoting the principles of his party, by epitomiſing Hacket's "Life of Archbiſhop Williams." The original book is written with ſuch depravity of genius, ſuch mixture of the fop and pedant, as has not often appeared. The epitome is free enough from affectation, but has little ſpirit or vigour.

In 1712 he brought upon the ſtage "The Diſtreſt Mother," almoſt a tranſlation of Racine's "Andromaque." Such a work requires no uncommon powers; but the friends of Philips exerted every art to promote his intereſt. Before the appearance of the play, a whole "Spectator," none indeed of the beſt, was devoted to its praiſe; while it yet continued to be acted, another "Spectator" was written, to tell what impreſſion it made upon Sir Roger; and on the firſt night a ſelect audience, ſays Pope *, was called together to applaud it.

It was concluded with the moſt ſucceſsful Epilogue that was ever yet ſpoken on the Engliſh theatre. The three firſt nights it was recited twice; and not only continued to be demanded through the run, as it is termed, of the play, but whenever it is recalled

* Spence.

to

to the ſtage, where by peculiar fortune, though a copy from the French, it yet keeps its place, the Epilogue is ſtill expected, and is ſtill ſpoken.

The propriety of Epilogues in general, and conſequently of this, was queſtioned by a correſpondent of the "Spectator," whoſe Letter was undoubtedly admitted for the ſake of the anſwer, which ſoon followed, written with much zeal and acrimony. The attack and the defence equally contributed to ſtimulate curioſity and continue attention. It may be diſcovered in the defence, that Prior's Epilogue to "Phædra" had a little excited jealouſy; and ſomething of Prior's plan may be diſcovered in the performance of his rival. Of this diſtinguiſhed Epilogue the reputed author was the wretched Budgel, whom Addiſon uſed to denominate * "the man who "calls me couſin;" and when he was aſked how ſuch a ſilly fellow could write ſo well, replied, "The "Epilogue was quite another thing when I ſaw it "firſt." It was known in Tonſon's family, and told to Garrick, that Addiſon was himſelf the author of it, and that, when it had been at firſt printed with his name, he came early in the morning, before the copies were diſtributed, and ordered it to be given to Budgel, that it might add weight to the ſolicitation which he was then making for a place.

Philips was now high in the ranks of literature. His play was applauded; his tranſlations from Sappho had been publiſhed in the "Spectator;" he was an important and diſtinguiſhed aſſociate of clubs witty

* Spence.

and

and political; and nothing was wanting to his happiness, but that he should be sure of its continuance.

The work which had procured him the first notice from the publick was his Six Pastorals, which, flattering the imagination with Arcadian scenes, probably found many readers, and might have long passed as a pleasing amusement, had they not been unhappily too much commended.

The rustick poems of Theocritus were so highly valued by the Greeks and Romans, that they attracted the imitation of Virgil, whose Eclogues seem to have been considered as precluding all attempts of the same kind; for no shepherds were taught to sing by any succeeding poet, till Nemesian and Calphurnius ventured their feeble efforts in the lower age of Latin literature.

At the revival of learning in Italy, it was soon discovered that a dialogue of imaginary swains might be composed with little difficulty; because the conversation of shepherds excludes profound or refined sentiment; and, for images and descriptions, Satyrs and Fauns, and Naiads and Dryads, were always within call; and woods and meadows, and hills and rivers, supplied variety of matter, which, having a natural power to sooth the mind, did not quickly cloy it.

Petrarch entertained the learned men of his age with the novelty of modern Pastorals in Latin. Being not ignorant of Greek, and finding nothing in the word *Eclogue* of rural meaning, he supposed it to be corrupted by the copiers, and therefore called his own productions *Æglogues*, by which he meant to express the talk of goatherds, though it will mean

only

only the talk of goats. This new name was adopted by ſubſequent writers, and amongſt others by our Spenſer.

More than a century afterwards (1498) Mantuan publiſhed his Bucolicks with ſuch ſucceſs, that they were ſoon dignified by Badius with a comment, and, as Scaliger complained, received into ſchools, and taught as claſſical; his complaint was vain, and the practice, however injudicious, ſpread far, and continued long. Mantuan was read, at leaſt in ſome of the inferior ſchools of this kingdom, to the beginning of the preſent century. The ſpeakers of Mantuan carried their diſquiſitions beyond the country, to cenſure the corruptions of the Church; and from him Spenſer learned to employ his ſwains on topicks of controverſy.

The Italians ſoon transferred Paſtoral Poetry into their own language: Sannazaro wrote "Arcadia," in proſe and verſe; Taſſo and Guarini wrote "Favole Boſchareccie," or Sylvan Dramas; and all nations of Europe filled volumes with *Thyrſis* and *Damon*, and *Theſtylis* and *Phyllis*.

Philips thinks it "ſomewhat ſtrange to conceive "how, in an age ſo addicted to the Muſes, Paſtoral "Poetry never comes to be ſo much as thought "upon." His wonder ſeems very unſeaſonable; there had never, from the time of Spenſer, wanted writers to talk occaſionally of *Arcadia* and *Strephon*; and half the book, in which he firſt tried his powers, conſiſts of dialogues on Queen Mary's death, between *Tityrus* and *Corydon*, or *Mopſus* and *Menalcas*. A ſeries or book of Paſtorals, however, I know not that any one had then lately publiſhed.

Not

Not long afterwards Pope made the firſt diſplay of his powers in four Paſtorals, written in a very different form. Philips had taken Spenſer, and Pope took Virgil for his pattern. Philips endeavoured to be natural, Pope laboured to be elegant.

Philips was now favoured by Addiſon, and by Addiſon's companions, who were very willing to puſh him into reputation. The "Guardian" gave an account of Paſtoral, partly critical, and partly hiſtorical; in which, when the merit of the modern is compared, Taſſo and Guarini are cenſured for remote thoughts and unnatural refinements; and, upon the whole, the Italians and French are all excluded from rural poetry; and the pipe of the paſtoral muſe is tranſmitted by lawful inheritance from Theocritus to Virgil, from Virgil to Spenſer, and from Spenſer to Philips.

With this inauguration of Philips, his rival Pope was not much delighted; he therefore drew a compariſon of Philips's performance with his own, in which, with an unexampled and unequalled artifice of irony, though he has himſelf always the advantage, he gives the preference to Philips. The deſign of aggrandizing himſelf he diſguiſed with ſuch dexterity, that, though Addiſon diſcovered it, Steele was deceived, and was afraid of diſpleaſing Pope by publiſhing his paper. Publiſhed however it was ("Guard. 40."): and from that time Pope and Philips lived in a perpetual reciprocation of malevolence.

In poetical powers, of either praiſe or ſatire, there was no proportion between the combatants; but Philips, though he could not prevail by wit, hoped

to

to hurt Pope with another weapon, and charged him, as Pope thought, with Addiſon's approbation, as diſaffected to the government.

Even with this he was not ſatisfied; for, indeed, there is no appearance that any regard was paid to his clamours. He proceeded to groſſer inſults, and hung up a rod at Button's, with which he threatened to chaſtiſe Pope, who appears to have been extremely exaſperated; for in the firſt edition of his Letters he calls Philips "raſcal," and in the laſt ſtill charges him with detaining in his hands the ſubſcriptions for Homer delivered to him by the Hanover Club.

I ſuppoſe it was never ſuſpected that he meant to appropriate the money; he only delayed, and with ſufficient meanneſs, the gratification of him by whoſe proſperity he was pained.

Men ſometimes ſuffer by injudicious kindneſs; Philips became ridiculous, without his own fault, by the abſurd admiration of his friends, who decorated him with honorary garlands, which the firſt breath of contradiction blaſted.

When upon the ſucceſſion of the Houſe of Hanover every Whig expected to be happy, Philips ſeems to have obtained too little notice; he caught few drops of the golden ſhower, though he did not omit what flattery could perform. He was only made a Commiſſioner of the Lottery (1717), and, what did not much elevate his character, a juſtice of the Peace.

The ſucceſs of his firſt play muſt naturally diſpoſe him to turn his hopes towards the ſtage: he did not however ſoon commit himſelf to the mercy of an audience, but contented himſelf with the fame already

ready acquired, till after nine years he produced (1722) "The Briton," a tragedy which, whatever was its reception, is now neglected; though one of the ſcenes, between Vanoc the Britiſh Prince and Valens the Roman General, is confeſſed to be written with great dramatick ſkill, animated by ſpirit truly poetical.

He had not been idle though he had been ſilent; for he exhibited another tragedy the ſame year, on the ſtory of "Humphry Duke of Glouceſter." This tragedy is only remembered by its title.

His happieſt undertaking was of a paper, called "The Freethinker," in conjunction with aſſociates, of whom one was Dr. Boulter, who, then only miniſter of a pariſh in Southwark, was of ſo much conſequence to the government, that he was made firſt Biſhop of Briſtol, and afterwards Primate of Ireland, where his piety and his charity will be long honoured.

It may eaſily be imagined that what was printed under the direction of Boulter would have nothing in it indecent or licentious; its title is to be underſtood as implying only freedom from unreaſonable prejudice. It has been reprinted in volumes, but is little read; nor can impartial criticiſm recommend it as worthy of revival.

Boulter was not well qualified to write diurnal eſſays; but he knew how to practiſe the liberality of greatneſs and the fidelity of friendſhip. When he was advanced to the height of eccleſiaſtical dignity, he did not forget the companion of his labours. Knowing Philips to be ſlenderly ſupported, he took him to Ireland, as partaker of his fortune; and, making him his ſecretary, added ſuch preferments,

as enabled him to repreſent the county of Armagh in the Iriſh Parliament.

In December 1726 he was made ſecretary to the Lord Chancellor; and in Auguſt 1733 became judge of the Prerogative Court.

After the death of his patron he continued ſome years in Ireland; but at laſt longing, as it ſeems, for his native country, he returned (1748) to London, having doubtleſs ſurvived moſt of his friends and enemies, and among them his dreaded antagoniſt Pope. He found however the Duke of Newcaſtle ſtill living, and to him he dedicated his poems collected into a volume.

Having purchaſed an annuity of four hundred pounds, he now certainly hoped to paſs ſome years of life in plenty and tranquillity; but his hope deceived him: he was ſtruck with a palſy, and died June 18, 1749, in his ſeventy-eighth year.

Of his perſonal character all that I have heard is, that he was eminent for bravery and ſkill in the ſword, and that in converſation he was ſolemn and pompous. He had great ſenſibility of cenſure, if judgement may be made by a ſingle ſtory which I heard long ago from Mr. Ing, a gentleman of great eminence in Staffordſhire. "Philips," ſaid he, "was once at "table, when I aſked him, How came thy king of "Epirus to drive oxen, and to ſay 'I'm goaded on "by love?' After which queſtion he never ſpoke "again."

Of the "Diſtreſt Mother" not much is pretended to be his own, and therefore it is no ſubject of criticiſm: his other two tragedies, I believe, are not below mediocrity, nor above it. Among the Poems

comprifed in the late Collection, the "Letter from "Denmark" may be juftly praifed; the Paftorals, which by the writer of the "Guardian" were ranked as one of the four genuine productions of the ruftick Mufe, cannot furely be defpicable. That they exhibit a mode of life which did not exift, nor ever exifted, is not to be objected: the fuppofition of fuch a ftate is allowed to Paftoral. In his other poems he cannot be denied the praife of lines fometimes elegant; but he has feldom much force, or much comprehenfion. The pieces that pleafe beft are thofe which, from Pope and Pope's adherents, procured him the name of *Namby Pamby*, the poems of fhort lines, by which he paid his court to all ages and characters, from Walpole the "fteerer of the realm," to Mifs Pulteney in the nurfery. The numbers are fmooth and fprightly, and the diction is feldom faulty. They are not loaded with much thought, yet, if they had been written by Addifon, they would have had admirers: little things are not valued but when they are done by thofe who cannot do greater.

In his tranflations from Pindar he found the art of reaching all the obfcurity of the Theban bard, however he may fall below his fublimity; he will be allowed, if he has lefs fire, to have more fmoke.

He has added nothing to Englifh poetry, yet at leaft half his book deferves to be read: perhaps he valued moft himfelf that part which the critick would reject.

W E S T.

GILBERT WEST is one of the writers of whom I regret my inability to give a ſufficient account; the intelligence which my enquiries have obtained is general and ſcanty.

He was the ſon of the reverend Dr. Weſt; perhaps him who publiſhed "Pindar" at Oxford about the beginning of this century. His mother was ſiſter to Sir Richard Temple, afterwards Lord Cobham. His father, purpoſing to educate him for the Church, ſent him firſt to Eton, and afterwards to Oxford; but he was ſeduced to a more airy mode of life, by a commiſſion in a troop of horſe, procured him by his uncle.

He continued ſome time in the army; though it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that he never ſunk into a mere ſoldier, nor ever loſt the love, or much neglected the purſuit, of learning; and afterwards, finding himſelf more inclined to civil employment, he laid down his commiſſion, and engaged in buſineſs under the Lord Townſhend, then ſecretary of ſtate, with whom he attended the King to Hanover.

 His

His adherence to Lord Townſhend ended in nothing but a nomination (May, 1729) to be clerk-extraordinary of the Privy Council, which produced no immediate profit; for it only placed him in a ſtate of expectation and right of ſucceſſion, and it was very long before a vacancy admitted him to profit.

Soon afterwards he married, and ſettled himſelf in a very pleaſant houſe at Wickham in Kent, where he devoted himſelf to learning, and to piety. Of his learning the late Collection exhibits evidence, which would have been yet fuller, if the diſſertations which accompany his verſion of Pindar had not been improperly omitted. Of his piety the influence has, I hope, been extended far by his "Obſervations on "the Reſurrection," publiſhed in 1747, for which the Univerſity of Oxford created him a Doctor of Laws by diploma (March 30, 1748), and would doubtleſs have reached yet further had he lived to complete what he had for ſome time meditated, the Evidences of the Truth of the New Teſtament. Perhaps it may not be without effect to tell, that he read the prayers of the publick liturgy every morning to his family, and that on Sunday evening he called his ſervants into the parlour, and read to them firſt a ſermon and then prayers. Craſhaw is now not the only maker of verſes to whom may be given the two venerable names of *Poet* and *Saint*.

He was very often viſited by Lyttelton and Pitt, who, when they were weary of faction and debates, uſed at Wickham to find books and quiet, a decent table, and literary converſation. There is at Wickham a walk made by Pitt; and, what is of far more

importance, at Wickham Lyttelton received that conviction which produced his "Differtation on St. Paul."

Thefe two illuftrious friends had for a while liftened to the blandifhments of infidelity; and when Weft's book was publifhed, it was bought by fome who did not know his change of opinion, in expectation of new objections againft Chriftianity; and as infidels do not want malignity, they revenged the difappointment by calling him a Methodift.

Mr. Weft's income was not large; and his friends endeavoured, but without fuccefs, to obtain an augmentation. It is reported, that the education of the young Prince was offered to him, but that he required a more extenfive power of fuperintendance than it was thought proper to allow him.

In time, however, his revenue was improved; he lived to have one of the lucrative clerkfhips of the Privy Council (1752); and Mr. Pitt at laft had it in his power to make him treafurer of Chelfea Hofpital.

He was now fufficiently rich; but wealth came too late to be long enjoyed; nor could it fecure him from the calamities of life; he loft (1755) his only fon; and the year after (March 26) a ftroke of the palfy brought to the grave one of the few poets to whom the grave might be without its terrors.

Of his tranflations I have only compared the firft Olympick Ode with the original, and found my expectation furpaffed, both by its elegance and its exactnefs. He does not confine himfelf to his author's train of ftanzas; for he faw that the difference of languages required a different mode of verfification. The firft ftrophe is eminently happy; in the fecond he has a little ftrayed from Pindar's meaning, who

ſays, "if thou, my ſoul, wiſheſt to ſpeak of games, "look not in the deſert ſky for a planet hotter than "the ſun; nor ſhall we tell of nobler games than "thoſe of Olympia." He is ſometimes too paraphraſtical. Pindar beſtows upon Hiero an epithet, which, in one word, ſignifies *delighting in horſes*; a word which, in the tranſlation, generates theſe lines:

Hiero's royal brows, whoſe care
  Tends the courſer's noble breed,
Pleas'd to nurſe the pregnant mare,
  Pleas'd to train the youthful ſteed.

Pindar ſays of Pelops, that "he came alone in the "dark to the White Sea;" and Weſt,

Near the billow-beaten ſide
Of the foam-beſilver'd main,
Darkling, and alone, he ſtood:

which however is leſs exuberant than the former paſſage.

A work of this kind muſt, in a minute examination, diſcover many imperfections; but Weſt's verſion, ſo far as I have conſidered it, appears to be the product of great labour and great abilities.

His "Inſtitution of the Garter" (1742) is written with ſufficient knowledge of the manners that prevailed in the age to which it is referred, and with great elegance of diction; but, for want of a proceſs of events, neither knowledge nor elegance preſerve the reader from wearineſs.

His "Imitations of Spenſer" are very ſucceſsfully performed, both with reſpect to the metre, the language, and the fiction; and being engaged at once by

by the excellence of the ſentiments, and the artifice of the copy, the mind has two amuſements together. But ſuch compoſitions are not to be reckoned among the great atchievements of intellect, becauſe their effect is local and temporary; they appeal not to reaſon or paſſion, but to memory, and pre-ſuppoſe an accidental or artificial ſtate of mind. An imitation of Spenſer is nothing to a reader, however acute, by whom Spenſer has never been peruſed. Works of this kind may deſerve praiſe, as proofs of great induſtry, and great nicety of obſervation; but the higheſt praiſe, the praiſe of genius, they cannot claim. The nobleſt beauties of art are thoſe of which the effect is co-extended with rational nature, or at leaſt with the whole circle of poliſhed life; what is leſs than this can be only pretty, the plaything of faſhion, and the amuſement of a day.

THERE is in the "Adventurer" a paper of verſes given to one of the authors as Mr. Weſt's, and ſuppoſed to have been written by him. It ſhould not be concealed, however, that it is printed with Mr. Jago's name in Dodſley's Collection, and is mentioned as his in a Letter of Shenſtone's. Perhaps Weſt gave it without naming the author, and Hawkeſworth, receiving it from him, thought it his; for his he thought it, as he told me, and as he tells the publick.

COLLINS.

COLLINS.

WILLIAM COLLINS was born at Chichefter, on the twenty-fifth day of December, about 1720. His father was a hatter of good reputation. He was in 1733, as Dr. Warton has kindly informed me, admitted fcholar of Winchefter College, where he was educated by Dr. Burton. His Englifh exercifes were better than his Latin.

He firft courted the notice of the publick by fome verfes to a "Lady weeping," publifhed in "The "Gentleman's Magazine."

In 1740, he ftood firft in the lift of the fcholars to be received in fucceffion at New College, but unhappily there was no vacancy. He became a Commoner of Queen's College, probably with a fcanty maintenance; but was, in about half a year, elected a *Demy* of Magdalen College, where he continued till he had taken a Bachelor's degree, and then fuddenly left the Univerfity; for what reafon I know not that he told.

He

He now (about 1744) came to London a literary adventurer, with many projects in his head, and very little money in his pocket. He designed many works; but his great fault was irresolution; or the frequent calls of immediate necessity broke his scheme, and suffered him to pursue no settled purpose. A man doubtful of his dinner, or trembling at a creditor, is not much disposed to abstracted meditation, or remote enquiries. He published proposals for a History of the Revival of Learning; and I have heard him speak with great kindness of Leo the Tenth, and with keen resentment of his tasteless successor. But probably not a page of his history was ever written. He planned several tragedies, but he only planned them. He wrote now-and-then odes and other poems, and did something, however little.

About this time I fell into his company. His appearance was decent and manly; his knowledge considerable, his views extensive, his conversation elegant, and his disposition chearful. By degrees I gained his confidence; and one day was admitted to him when he was immured by a bailiff, that was prowling in the street. On this occasion recourse was had to the booksellers, who, on the credit of a translation of Aristotle's Poeticks, which he engaged to write with a large commentary, advanced as much money as enabled him to escape into the country. He shewed me the guineas safe in his hand. Soon afterwards his uncle, Mr. Martin, a lieutenant-colonel, left him about two thousand pounds; a sum which Collins could scarcely think exhaustible, and which he did not live to exhaust. The guineas were then repaid, and the translation neglected.

But

But man is not born for happineſs. Collins, who, while he *ſtudied to live*, felt no evil but poverty, no ſooner *lived to ſtudy* than his life was aſſailed by more dreadful calamities, diſeaſe, and inſanity.

Having formerly written his character, while perhaps it was yet more diſtinctly impreſſed upon my memory, I ſhall inſert it here.

"Mr. Collins was a man of extenſive literature, and of vigorous faculties. He was acquainted not only with the learned tongues, but with the Italian, French, and Spaniſh languages. He had employed his mind chiefly on the works of fiction, and ſubjects of fancy; and, by indulging ſome peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with thoſe flights of imagination which paſs the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a paſſive acquieſcence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monſters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of inchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repoſe by the water-falls of Elyſian gardens.

"This was however the character rather of his inclination than his genius; the grandeur of wildneſs, and the novelty of extravagance, were always deſired by him, but not always attained. Yet, as diligence is never wholly loſt, if his efforts ſometimes cauſed harſhneſs and obſcurity, they likewiſe produced in happier moments ſublimity and ſplendour. This idea which he had formed of excellence led him to oriental fictions and allegorical imagery, and perhaps, while he was intent upon deſcription, he did not ſuffi-

 ciently

ciently cultivate ſentiment. His poems are the productions of a mind not deficient in fire, nor unfurniſhed with knowledge either of books or life, but ſomewhat obſtructed in its progreſs by deviation in queſt of miſtaken beauties.

"His morals were pure, and his opinions pious; in a long continuance of poverty, and long habits of diſſipation, it cannot be expected that any character ſhould be exactly uniform. There is a degree of want by which the freedom of agency is almoſt deſtroyed; and long aſſociation with fortuitous companions will at laſt relax the ſtrictneſs of truth, and abate the fervour of ſincerity. That this man, wiſe and virtuous as he was, paſſed always unentangled through the ſnares of life, it would be prejudice and temerity to affirm; but it may be ſaid that at leaſt he preſerved the ſource of action unpolluted, that his principles were never ſhaken, that his diſtinctions of right and wrong were never confounded, and that his faults had nothing of malignity or deſign, but proceeded from ſome unexpected preſſure, or caſual temptation.

"The latter part of his life cannot be remembered but with pity and ſadneſs. He languiſhed ſome years under that depreſſion of mind which enchains the faculties without deſtroying them, and leaves reaſon the knowledge of right without the power of purſuing it. Theſe clouds which he perceived gathering on his intellects, he endeavoured to diſperſe by travel, and paſſed into France; but found himſelf conſtrained to yield to his malady, and returned. He was for ſome time confined in a houſe of lunaticks, and afterwards retired

retired to the care of his ſiſter in Chicheſter, where death in 1756 came to his relief.

"After his return from France, the writer of this character paid him a viſit at Iſlington, where he was waiting for his ſiſter, whom he had directed to meet him: there was then nothing of diſorder diſcernible in his mind by any but himſelf; but he had withdrawn from ſtudy, and travelled with no other book than an Engliſh Teſtament, ſuch as children carry to the ſchool: when his friend took it into his hand, out of curioſity to ſee what companion a Man of Letters had choſen, 'I have but one book,' ſaid Collins, 'but that is the beſt'."

Such was the fate of Collins, with whom I once delighted to converſe, and whom I yet remember with tenderneſs.

He was viſited at Chicheſter, in his laſt illneſs, by his learned friends Dr. Warton and his brother; to whom he ſpoke with diſapprobation of his Oriental Eclogues, as not ſufficiently expreſſive of Aſiatick manners, and called them his Iriſh Eclogues. He ſhewed them, at the ſame time, an ode inſcribed to Mr. John Hume, on the ſuperſtitions of the Highlands; which they thought ſuperior to his other works, but which no ſearch has yet found *.

His diſorder was no alienation of mind, but general laxity and feebleneſs, a deficiency rather of his vital than his intellectual powers. What he ſpoke wanted neither judgement nor ſpirit; but a few minutes exhauſted him, ſo that he was forced to reſt upon

* It is printed in the late Collection. R.

the couch, till a ſhort ceſſation reſtored his powers, and he was again able to talk with his former vigour.

The approaches of this dreadful malady he began to feel ſoon after his uncle's death; and, with the uſual weakneſs of men ſo diſeaſed, eagerly ſnatched that temporary relief with which the table and the bottle flatter and ſeduce. But his health continually declined, and he grew more and more burthenſome to himſelf.

To what I have formeely ſaid of his writings may be added, that his diction was often harſh, unſkilfully laboured, and injudiciouſly ſelected. He affected the obſolete when it was not worthy of revival; and he puts his words out of the common order, ſeeming to think, with ſome later candidates for fame, that not to write proſe is certainly to write poetry. His lines commonly are of ſlow motion, clogged and impeded with cluſters of conſonants. As men are often eſteemed who cannot be loved, ſo the poetry of Collins may ſometimes extort praiſe when it gives little pleaſure.

Mr. Collins's firſt production is added here from the "Poetical Calendar."

TO MISS AURELIA C——R,

ON HER WEEPING AT HER SISTER'S WEDDING.

Ceaſe, fair Aurelia, ceaſe to mourn;
  Lament not Hannah's happy ſtate;
You may be happy in your turn,
  And ſeize the treaſure you regret.

With

With Love united Hymen ſtands,
  And ſoftly whiſpers to your charms,
"Meet but your lover in my bands,
  "You'll find your ſiſter in his arms."

DYER.

JOHN DYER, of whom I have no other account to give than his own Letters, publiſhed with Hughes's correſpondence, and the notes added by the editor, have afforded me, was born in 1700, the ſecond ſon of Robert Dyer of Aberglaſney, in Caermarthenſhire, a ſolicitor of great capacity and note.

He paſſed through Weſtminſter ſchool under the care of Dr. Freind, and was then called home to be inſtructed in his father's profeſſion. But his father died ſoon, and he took no delight in the ſtudy of the law, but, having always amuſed himſelf with drawing, reſolved to turn painter, and became pupil to Mr. Richardſon, an artiſt then of high reputation, but now better known by his books than by his pictures.

Having ſtudied awhile under his maſter, he became, as he tells his friend, an intinerant painter, and wandered about South Wales and the parts adjacent; but he mingled poetry with painting, and about

"1727 printed "Grongar Hill" in Lewis's Miſcellany.

Being, probably, unſatisfied with his own proficiency, he, like other painters, travelled to Italy; and coming back in 1740, publiſhed the "Ruins of "Rome."

If his poem was written ſoon after his return, he did not make uſe of his acquiſitions in painting, whatever they might be; for decline of health and love of ſtudy determined him to the Church. He therefore entered into Orders; and, it ſeems, married about the ſame time a lady of the name of Enſor; "whoſe grand-mother," ſays he, "was a Shakſpeare, "deſcended from a brother of every body's Shak"ſpeare;" by her, in 1756, he had a ſon and three daughters living.

His eccleſiaſtical proviſion was for a long time but ſlender. His firſt patron, Mr. Harper, gave him, in 1741, Calthorp in Leiceſterſhire, of eighty pounds a year, on which he lived ten years, and then exchanged it for Belchford in Lincolnſhire, of ſeventy-five. His condition now began to mend. In 1751, Sir John Heathcote gave him Coningſby, of one hundred and forty pounds a year; and in 1755 the Chancellor added Kirkby, of one hundred and ten. He complains that the repair of the houſe at Coningſby, and other expences, took away the profit. In 1757 he publiſhed "The Fleece," his greateſt poetical work; of which I will not ſuppreſs a ludicrous ſtory. Dodſley the bookſeller was one day mentioning it to a critical viſiter, with more expectation of ſucceſs than the other could eaſily admit. In the converſation the author's age was aſked; and being repreſented as ad-

vanced in life, "He will," said the critick, "be "buried in woollen."

He did not indeed long survive that publication, nor long enjoy the increase of his preferments; for in 1758 he died.

Dyer is not a poet of bulk or dignity sufficient to require an elaborate criticism. "Grongar Hill" is the happiest of his productions: it is not indeed very accurately written; but the scenes which it displays are so pleasing, the images which they raise are so welcome to the mind, and the reflections of the writer so consonant to the general sense or experience of mankind, that when it is once read, it will be read again.

The idea of the "Ruins of Rome" strikes more, but pleases less, and the title raises greater expectation than the performance gratifies. Some passages, however, are conceived with the mind of a poet; as when, in the neighbourhood of dilapidating edifices, he says,

— The Pilgrim oft
At dead of night, mid his orison hears
Aghast the voice of time, disparting tow'rs,
Tumbling all precipitate down dash'd,
Rattling around, loud thund'ring to the Moon.

Of "The Fleece," which never became popular, and is now universally neglected, I can say little that is likely to recall it to attention. The woolcomber and the poet appear to me such discordant natures, that an attempt to bring them together is to *couple the serpent with the fowl*. When Dyer, whose mind was not unpoetical, has done his utmost, by interest-

ing

ing his reader in our native commodity, by interſperſing rural imagery, and incidental digreſſions, by cloathing ſmall images in great words, and by all the writer's arts of deluſion, the meanneſs naturally adhering, and the irreverence habitually annexed to trade and manufacture, ſink him under inſuperable oppreſſion; and the diſguſt which blank verſe, encumbering and encumbered, ſuperadds to an unpleaſing ſubject, ſoon repels the reader, however willing to be pleaſed.

Let me however honeſtly report whatever may counterbalance this weight of cenſure. I have been told, that Akenſide, who, upon a poetical queſtion, has a right to be heard, ſaid, " That he would re-" gulate his opinion of the reigning taſte by the fate " of Dyer's " Fleece;" for, if that were ill-received, " he ſhould not think it any longer reaſonable to ex-" pect fame from excellence."

SHENSTONE.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, the ſon of Thomas Shenſtone and Anne Pen, was born in November 1714, at the Leaſowes in Hales-Owen, one of thoſe inſulated diſtricts which, in the diviſion of the kingdom, was appended, for ſome reaſon not now diſcoverable, to a diſtant county; and which, though ſurrounded by Warwickſhire and Worceſterſhire, belongs to Shropſhire, though perhaps thirty miles diſtant from any other part of it.

He learned to read of an old dame, whom his poem of the "School-miſtreſs" has delivered to poſterity; and ſoon received ſuch delight from books, that he was always calling for freſh entertainment, and expected that, when any of the family went to market, a new book ſhould be brought him, which, when it came, was in fondneſs carried to bed and laid by him. It is ſaid, that, when his requeſt had been neglected, his mother wrapped up a piece of wood of the ſame form, and pacified him for the night.

As he grew older, he went for a while to the Grammar-ſchool in Hales-Owen, and was placed afterwards with Mr. Crumpton, an eminent ſchool-maſter at Solihul, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the quickneſs of his progreſs.

When he was young (June 1724) he was deprived of his father, and ſoon after (Auguſt 1726) of his grandfather; and was, with his brother, who died afterwards unmarried, left to the care of his grandmother, who managed the eſtate.

From ſchool he was ſent in 1732 to Pembroke College in Oxford, a ſociety which for half a century has been eminent for Engliſh poetry and elegant literature. Here it appears that he found delight and advantage; for he continued his name in the book ten years, though he took no degree. After the firſt four years he put on the Civilian's gown, but without ſhewing any intention to engage in the profeſſion.

About the time when he went to Oxford, the death of his grandmother devolved his affairs to the care of the reverend Mr. Dolman, of Brome in Staffordſhire, whoſe attention he always mentioned with gratitude.

At Oxford he employed himſelf upon Engliſh poetry; and in 1737 publiſhed a ſmall Miſcellany, without his name.

He then for a time wandered about, to acquaint himſelf with life, and was ſometimes at London, ſometimes at Bath, or any other place of publick reſort; but he did not forget his poetry. He publiſhed in 1741 his "Judgement of Hercules," addreſſed to

Mr. Lyttelton, whose interest he supported with great warmth at an election: this was next year followed by the "School-mistress."

Mr. Dolman, to whose care he was indebted for his ease and leisure, died in 1745, and the care of his own fortune now fell upon him. He tried to escape it a while, and lived at his house with his tenants, who were distantly related; but, finding that imperfect possession inconvenient, he took the whole estate into his own hands, more to the improvement of its beauty, than the increase of its produce.

Now was excited his delight in rural pleasures, and his ambition of rural elegance: he began from this time to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, to entangle his walks, and to wind his waters; which he did with such judgement and such fancy, as made his little domain the envy of the great, and the admiration of the skilful; a place to be visited by travellers, and copied by designers. Whether to plant a walk in undulating curves, and to place a bench at every turn where there is an object to catch the view; to make the water run where it will be heard, and to stagnate where it will be seen; to leave intervals where the eye will be pleased, and to thicken the plantation where there is something to be hidden; demands any great powers of mind, I will not enquire: perhaps a sullen and surly speculator may think such performances rather the sport than the business of human reason. But it must be at least confessed, that to embellish the form of nature is an innocent amusement; and some praise must be allowed, by the most supercilious observer, to him who does

does beſt what ſuch multitudes are contending to do well.

This praiſe was the praiſe of Shenſtone; but, like all other modes of felicity, it was not enjoyed without its abatements. Lyttelton was his neighbour and his rival, whoſe empire, ſpacious and opulent, looked with diſdain on the *petty State* that *appeared behind it.* For a while the inhabitants of Hagley affected to tell their acquaintance of the little fellow that was trying to make himſelf admired; but when by degrees the Leaſowes forced themſelves into notice, they took care to defeat the curioſity which they could not ſuppreſs, by conducting their viſitants perverſely to inconvenient points of view, and introducing them at the wrong end of a walk to detect a deception; injuries of which Shenſtone would heavily complain. Where there is emulation there will be vanity; and where there is vanity there will be folly *.

The pleaſure of Shenſtone was all in his eye: he valued what he valued merely for its looks; nothing raiſed his indignation more than to aſk if there were any fiſhes in his water.

* This charge againſt the Lyttelton family has been denied with ſome degree of warmth by Mr. Potter, and ſince by Mr. Graves. The latter ſays, " The truth of the caſe, I believe, was, that the " Lyttelton family went ſo frequently with their family to the " Leaſowes, that they were unwilling to break in upon Mr. " Shenſtone's retirement on every occaſion, and therefore often " went to the principal points of view without waiting for any one " to conduct them regularly through the whole walks. Of this " Mr. Shenſtone would ſometimes peeviſhly complain; though, I " am perſuaded, he never really ſuſpected any ill-natured inten- " tion in his worthy and much-valued neighbours." R.

His houſe was mean, and he did not improve it; his care was of his grounds. When he came home from his walks, he might find his floors flooded by a ſhower through the broken roof; but could ſpare no money for its reparation.

In time his expences brought clamours about him, that overpowered the lamb's bleat and the linnet's ſong; and his groves were haunted by beings very different from fawns and fairies *. He ſpent his eſtate in adorning it, and his death was probably haſtened by his anxieties. He was a lamp that ſpent its oil in blazing. It is ſaid, that, if he had lived a little longer, he would have been aſſiſted by a penſion: ſuch bounty could not have been ever more properly beſtowed; but that it was not aſked is not certain; it is too certain that it never was enjoyed.

He died at Leaſowes, of a putrid fever, about five on Friday morning, February 11, 1763; and was buried by the ſide of his brother in the church-yard of Hales-Owen.

* Mr. Graves, however, expreſſes his belief that this is a groundleſs ſurmiſe. "Mr. Shenſtone," he adds, "was too much "reſpected in the neighbourhood to be treated with rudeneſs; "and though his works (frugally as they were managed), added "to his manner of living, muſt neceſſarily have made him exceed "his income, and, of courſe, he might ſometimes be diſtreſſed "for money, yet he had too much ſpirit to expoſe himſelf to in"ſults from trifling ſums, and guarded againſt any great diſtreſs, "by anticipating a few hundreds; which his eſtate could very "well bear, as appeared by what remained to his executors after "the payment of his debts, and his legacies to his friends, and "annuities of thirty pounds a year to one ſervant, and ſix pounds "to another; for his will was dictated with equal juſtice and ge"neroſity." R.

He

He was never married, though he might have obtained the lady, whoever ſhe was, to whom his "Paſ-"toral Ballad" was addreſſed. He is repreſented by his friend Dodſley as a man of great tenderneſs and generoſity, kind to all that were within his influence; but, if once offended, not eaſily appeaſed; inattentive to œconomy, and careleſs of his expences; in his perſon he was larger than the middle ſize, with ſomething clumſy in his form; very negligent of his cloaths, and remarkable for wearing his grey hair in a particular manner; for he held that the faſhion was no rule of dreſs, and that every man was to ſuit his appearance to his natural form *.

His mind was not very comprehenſive, nor his curioſity active; he had no value for thoſe parts of knowledge which he had not himſelf cultivated.

His life was unſtained by any crime; the Elegy on Jeſſe, which has been ſuppoſed to relate an unfortunate and criminal amour of his own, was known by his friends to have been ſuggeſted by the ſtory of Miſs Godfrey in Richardſon's "Pamela."

What Gray thought of his character, from the peruſal of his Letters, was this:

"I have read too an octavo volume of Shenſtone's "Letters. Poor man! he was always wiſhing for "money, for fame, and other diſtinctions; and "his whole philoſophy conſiſted in living againſt his

* "Theſe," ſays Mr. Graves, "were not preciſely his ſenti-"ments, though he thought right enough, that every one ſhould, "in ſome degree, conſult his particular ſhape and complexion in "adjuſting his dreſs; and that no faſhion ought to ſanctify what "was ungraceful, abſurd, or really deformed."

"will

" will in retirement, and in a place which his taste " had adorned, but which he only enjoyed when " people of note came to see and commend it; his " correspondence is about nothing else but this place " and his own writings, with two or three neighbour- " ing clergymen, who wrote verses too."

His poems consist of elegies, odes, and ballads, humorous sallies, and moral pieces.

His conception of an Elegy he has in his Preface very judiciously and discriminately explained. It is, according to his account, the effusion of a contemplative mind, sometimes plaintive, and always serious, and therefore superior to the glitter of slight ornaments. His compositions suit not ill to this description. His topicks of praise are the domestick virtues, and his thoughts are pure and simple; but, wanting combination, they want variety. The peace of solitude, the innocence of inactivity, and the unenvied security of an humble station, can fill but a few pages. That of which the essence is uniformity will be soon described. His Elegies have therefore too much resemblance of each other.

The lines are sometimes, such as Elegy requires, smooth and easy; but to this praise his claim is not constant; his diction is often harsh, improper, and affected; his words ill-coined, or ill-chosen; and his phrase unskilfully inverted.

The Lyrick Poems are almost all of the light and airy kind, such as trip lightly and nimbly along, without the load of any weighty meaning. From these, however, "Rural Elegance" has some right to be excepted. I once heard it praised by a very learned lady; and though the lines are irregular, and the thoughts

thoughts diffused with too much verbosity, yet it cannot be denied to contain both philosophical argument and poetical spirit.

Of the rest I cannot think any excellent: the "Skylark" pleases me best, which has however more of the epigram than of the ode.

But the four parts of his "Pastoral Ballad" demand particular notice. I cannot but regret that it is pastoral; an intelligent reader, acquainted with the scenes of real life, sickens at the mention of the *crook*, the *pipe*, the *sheep*, and the *kids*, which it is not necessary to bring forward to notice, for the poet's art is selection, and he ought to shew the beauties without the grossness of the country life. His stanza seems to have been chosen in imitation of Rowe's "Despairing Shepherd."

In the first are two passages, to which if any mind denies its sympathy, it has no acquaintance with love or nature:

I priz'd every hour that went by,
  Beyond all that had pleas'd me before;
But now they are past, and I sigh,
  And I grieve that I priz'd them no more.

When forc'd the fair nymph to forego,
  What anguish I felt in my heart!
Yet I thought (but it might not be so)
  'Twas with pain that she saw me depart.

She gaz'd, as I slowly withdrew,
  My path I could hardly discern;
So sweetly she bade me adieu,
  I thought that she bade me return.

In

In the ſecond this paſſage has its prettineſs, though it be not equal to the former:

I have found out a gift for my fair;
 I have found where the wood-pigeons breed:
But let me that plunder forbear,
 She will ſay 'twas a barbarous deed:

For he ne'er could be true, ſhe averr'd,
 Who could rob a poor bird of its young;
And I lov'd her the more when I heard
 Such tenderneſs fall from her tongue.

In the third he mentions the common-places of amorous poetry with ſome addreſs:

'Tis his with mock paſſion to glow!
 'Tis his in ſmooth tales to unfold,
How her face is as bright as the ſnow,
 And her boſom, be ſure, is as cold:

How the nightingales labour the ſtrain,
 With the notes of this charmer to vie:
How they vary their accents in vain,
 Repine at her triumphs, and die.

In the fourth I find nothing better than this natural ſtrain of Hope:

Alas! from the day that we met,
 What hope of an end to my woes,
When I cannot endure to forget
 The glance that undid my repoſe?

Yet Time may diminiſh the pain:
 The flower, and the ſhrub, and the tree,
Which I rear'd for her pleaſure in vain,
 In time may have comfort for me.

His

His "Levities" are by their title exempted from the ſeverities of criticiſm; yet it may be remarked in a few words, that his humour is ſometimes groſs, and ſeldom ſprightly.

Of the Moral Poems the firſt is the "Choice of "Hercules," from Xenophon. The numbers are ſmooth, the diction elegant, and the thoughts juſt; but ſomething of vigour is ſtill to be wiſhed, which it might have had by brevity and compreſſion. His "Fate of Delicacy" has an air of gaiety, but not a very pointed and general moral. His blank verſes, thoſe that can read them may probably find to be like the blank verſes of his neighbours. "Love and "Honour" is derived from the old ballad, "Did "you not hear of a Spaniſh Lady?"—I wiſh it well enough to wiſh it were in rhyme.

The "School-miſtreſs," of which I know not what claim it has to ſtand among the Moral Works, is ſurely the moſt pleaſing of Shenſtone's performances. The adoption of a particular ſtyle, in light and ſhort compoſitions, contributes much to the increaſe of pleaſure: we are entertained at once with two imitations, of nature in the ſentiments, of the original author in the ſtyle, and between them the mind is kept in perpetual employment.

The general recommendation of Shenſtone is eaſineſs and ſimplicity; his general defect is want of comprehenſion and variety. Had his mind been better ſtored with knowledge, whether he could have been great, I know not; he could certainly have been agreeable.

YOUNG.

THE following life was written, at my requeſt, by a gentleman who had better information than I could eaſily have obtained; and the publick will perhaps wiſh that I had ſolicited and obtained more ſuch favours from him.

"DEAR SIR,

"In conſequence of our different converſations about authentick materials for the Life of Young, I ſend you the following detail.

"Of great men, ſomething muſt always be ſaid to gratify curioſity. Of the illuſtrious author of the "Night Thoughts" much has been told of which there never could have been proofs; and little care appears to have been taken to tell that, of which proofs, with little trouble, might have been procured."

EDWARD YOUNG was born at Upham, near Wincheſter, in June 1681. He was the ſon of Edward Young, at that time fellow of Wincheſter College

College and rector of Upham; who was the ſon of Jo. Young of Woodhay in Berkſhire, ſtyled by Wood, *gentleman*. In September 1682 the Poet's father was collated to the prebend of Gillingham Minor, in the church of Sarum, by biſhop Ward. When Ward's faculties were impaired through age, his duties were neceſſarily performed by others. We learn from Wood, that, at a viſitation of Sprat's, July the 12th, 1686, the prebendary preached a Latin ſermon, afterwards publiſhed, with which the biſhop was ſo pleaſed, that he told the chapter he was concerned to find the preacher had one of the worſt prebends in their church. Some time after this, in conſequence of his merit and reputation, or of the intereſt of Lord Bradford, to whom, in 1702, he dedicated two volumes of ſermons, he was appointed chaplain to King William and Queen Mary, and preferred to the deanery of Sarum. Jacob, who wrote in 1720, ſays, "he was chaplain and clerk of "the cloſet to the late Queen, who honoured him "by ſtanding godmother to the Poet." His fellowſhip of Wincheſter he reſigned in favour of a gentleman of the name of Harris, who married his only daughter. The dean died at Sarum, after a ſhort illneſs, in 1705, in the ſixty-third year of his age. On the Sunday after his deceaſe Biſhop Burnet preached at the cathedral, and began his ſermon with ſaying, "Death has been of late walking round us, "and making breach upon breach upon us, and has "now carried away the head of this body with a "ſtroke; ſo that he, whom you ſaw a week ago "diſtributing the holy myſteries, is now laid in the "duſt. But he ſtill lives in the many excellent di-

"rections

"rections he has left us, both how to live and how "to die."

The dean placed his fon upon the foundation at Winchefter College, where he had himfelf been educated. At this fchool Edward Young remained till the election after his eighteenth birth-day, the period at which thofe upon the foundation are fuperannuated. Whether he did not betray his abilities early in life, or his mafters had not fkill enough to difcover in their pupil any marks of genius for which he merited reward, or no vacancy at Oxford offered them an opportunity to beftow upon him the reward provided for merit by William of Wykeham; certain it is, that to an Oxford fellowfhip our poet did not fucceed. By chance, or by choice, New College cannot claim the honour of numbering among its fellows him who wrote the "Night Thoughts."

On the 13th of October, 1703, he was entered an independent member of New College, that he might live at little expence in the Warden's lodgings, who was a particular friend of his father's, till he fhould be qualified to ftand for a fellowfhip at All Souls. In a few months the warden of New College died. He then removed to Corpus College. The prefident of this fociety, from regard alfo for his father, invited him thither, in order to leffen his academical expences. In 1708, he was nominated to a law-fellowfhip at All Souls by Archbifhop Tenifon, into whofe hands it came by devolution. Such repeated patronage, while it juftifies Burnet's praife of the father, reflects credit on the conduct of the fon. The manner in which it was exerted feems to prove, that the father did not leave behind him much wealth.

On

On the 23d of April, 1714, Young took his degree of batchelor of civil laws, and his doctor's degree on the 10th of June, 1719.

Soon after he went to Oxford, he discovered, it is said, an inclination for pupils. Whether he ever commenced tutor is not known. None has hitherto boasted to have received his academical instruction from the author of the "Night Thoughts."

It is probable that his College was proud of him no less as a scholar than as a poet; for in 1716, when the foundation of the Codrington Library was laid, two years after he had taken his batchelor's degree, Young was appointed to speak the Latin oration. This is at least particular for being dedicated in English "To the Ladies of the Codrington Family." To these ladies he says, "that he was unavoidably flung "into a singularity, by being obliged to write an "epistle dedicatory void of common-place, and "such an one was never published before by any "author whatever; that this practice absolved them "from any obligation of reading what was presented "to them; and that the bookseller approved of it, "because it would make people stare, was absurd "enough and perfectly right."

Of this oration there is no appearance in his own edition of his works; and prefixed to an edition by Curll and Tonson, in 1741, is a letter from Young to Curll, if we may credit Curll, dated December the 9th, 1739, wherein he says that he has not leisure to review what he formerly wrote, and adds, "I have not the 'Epistle to Lord Lansdowne.' If "you will take my advice, I would have you omit

"that, and the oration on Codrington. I think the "collection will sell better without them."

There are who relate, that, when first Young found himself independent, and his own master at All Souls, he was not the ornament to religion and morality which he afterwards became.

The authority of his father, indeed, had ceased, some time before, by his death; and Young was certainly not ashamed to be patronized by the infamous Wharton. But Wharton befriended in Young, perhaps, the poet, and particularly the tragedian. If virtuous authors must be patronized only by virtuous peers, who shall point them out?

Yet Pope is said by Ruffhead to have told Warburton, that "Young had much of a sublime genius, though without common sense; so that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombast. This made him pass a *foolish youth*, the sport of peers and poets: but his having a very good heart enabled him to support the clerical character when he assumed it, first with decency, and afterwards with honour."

They who think ill of Young's morality in the early part of his life, may perhaps be wrong; but Tindal could not err in his opinion of Young's warmth and ability in the cause of religion. Tindal used to spend much of his time at All Souls. "The "other boys," said the Atheist, "I can always answer, "because I always know whence they have their "arguments, which I have read a hundred times; "but that fellow Young is continually pestering me "with something of his own *." After

* As my great friend is now become the subject of biography, it should be told, that, every time I called upon Johnson during the

After all, Tindal and the cenfurers of Young may be reconcileable. Young might, for two or three years, have tried that kind of life, in which his natural principles would not fuffer him to wallow long. If this were fo, he has left behind him not only his evidence in favour of virtue, but the potent teftimony of experience againft vice.

We fhall foon fee that one of his earlieft productions was more ferious than what comes from the generality of unfledged poets.

Young perhaps afcribed the good fortune of Addifon to the "Poem to his Majefty," prefented, with a copy of verfes, to Somers: and hoped that he alfo might foar to wealth and honours on wings of the fame kind. His firft poetical flight was when Queen Anne called up to the Houfe of Lords the fons of the Earls of Northampton and Aylefbury, and added, in one day, ten others to the number of peers. In order to reconcile the people to one, at leaft, of the new lords, he publifhed, in 1712, "An Epiftle to the Right Honourable George Lord "Lanfdowne." In this compofition the poet pours out his panegyrick with the extravagance of a young man, who thinks his prefent ftock of wealth will never be exhaufted.

The poem feems intended alfo to reconcile the publick to the late peace. This is endeavoured to be done by fhewing that men are flain in war, and

the time I was employed in collecting materials for this life and putting it together, he never fuffered me to depart without fome fuch farewell as this: "Don't forget that rafcal Tindal, Sir. "Be fure to hang up the Atheift." Alluding to this anecdote, which Johnfon had mentioned to me.

that in peace "harvests wave, and Commerce swells "her sail." If this be humanity, for which he meant it; is it politicks? Another purpose of this epistle appears to have been, to prepare the publick for the reception of some tragedy he might have in hand. His lordship's patronage, he says, will not let him "repent his passion for the stage;" and the particular praise bestowed on "Othello" and "Oroonoko" looks as if some such character as Zanga was even then in contemplation. The affectionate mention of the death of his friend Harrison of New College, at the close of this poem, is an instance of Young's art, which displayed itself so wonderfully some time afterwards in the "Night Thoughts," of making the publick a party in his private sorrow.

Should justice call upon you to censure this poem, it ought at least to be remembered that he did not insert it in his works; and that in the letter to Curll, as we have seen, he advises its omission. The booksellers, in the late body of English Poetry, should have distinguished what was deliberately rejected by the respective authors*. This I shall be careful to do with regard to Young. "I think," says he, "the following pieces in *four* volumes to be the most "excusable of all that I have written; and I wish "*less apology* was needful for these. As there is no "recalling what is got abroad, the pieces here re-"published I have revised and corrected, and ren-"dered them as *pardonable* as it was in my power to "do."

* Dr. Johnson, in many cases, thought and directed differently, particularly in Young's Works. J. N.

Shall the gates of repentance be ſhut only againſt literary ſinners?

When Addiſon publiſhed "Cato" in 1713, Young had the honour of prefixing to it a recommendatory copy of verſes. This is one of the pieces which the author of the "Night Thoughts" did not republiſh.

On the appearance of his "Poem on the Laſt Day," Addiſon did not return Young's compliment; but "The Engliſhman" of October 29, 1713, which was probably written by Addiſon, ſpeaks handſomely of this poem. The "Laſt Day" was publiſhed ſoon after the peace. The vice-chancellor's *imprimatur*, for it was printed at Oxford, is dated the 19th, 1713. From the exordium Young appears to have ſpent ſome time on the compoſition of it. While other bards "with Britain's hero ſet their ſouls on "fire," he draws, he ſays, a deeper ſcene. Marlborough *had been* conſidered by Britain as her *hero*; but, when the "Laſt Day" was publiſhed, female cabal had blaſted for a time the laurels of Blenheim. This ſerious poem was finiſhed by Young as early as 1710, before he was thirty; for part of it is printed in the "Tatler." It was inſcribed to the Queen, in a dedication, which, for ſome reaſon, he did not admit into his works. It tells her, that his only title to the great honour he now does himſelf, is the obligation which he formerly received from her royal indulgence.

Of this obligation nothing is now known, unleſs he alluded to her being his godmother. He is ſaid indeed to have been engaged at a ſettled ſtipend as a writer for the Court. In Swift's "Rhapſody on "Poetry" are theſe lines, ſpeaking of the Court——

Whence Gay was baniſh'd in diſgrace,
Where Pope will never ſhew his face,
Where Y—— muſt torture his invention
To flatter knaves, or loſe his penſion.

That Y—— means Young ſeems clear from four other lines in the ſame poem:

Attend, ye Popes and Youngs and Gays,
And tune your harps and ſtrew your bays;
Your panegyricks here provide;
You cannot err on flattery's ſide.

Yet who ſhall ſay with certainty, that Young was a penſioner? In all modern periods of this country, have not the writers on one ſide been regularly called Hirelings, and on the other Patriots?

Of the Dedication the complexion is clearly political. It ſpeaks in the higheſt terms of the late peace; it gives her Majeſty praiſe indeed for her victories, but ſays that the author is more pleaſed to ſee her riſe from this lower world, ſoaring above the clouds, paſſing the firſt and ſecond heavens, and leaving the fixed ſtars behind her; nor will he loſe her there, he ſays, but keep her ſtill in view through the boundleſs ſpaces on the other ſide of Creation, in her journey towards eternal bliſs, till he behold the heaven of heavens open, and angels receiving and conveying her ſtill onward from the ſtretch of his imagination, which tires in her purſuit, and falls back again to earth.

The Queen was ſoon called away from this lower world, to a place where human praiſe or human flattery, even leſs general than this, are of little conſequence. If Young thought the dedication contained only the praiſe of truth, he ſhould not have omitted

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it in his works. Was he conſcious of the exaggeration of party? Then he ſhould not have written it. The poem itſelf is not without a glance towards politicks, notwithſtanding the ſubject. The cry that the Church was in danger, had not yet ſubſided. The "Laſt Day," written by a layman, was much approved by the miniſtry, and their friends.

Before the Queen's death, "The Force of Religion, or Vanquiſhed Love," was ſent into the world. This poem is founded on the execution of Lady Jane Gray and her huſband Lord Guildford, 1554, a ſtory choſen for the ſubject of a tragedy by Edmund Smith, and wrought into a tragedy by Rowe. The dedication of it to the Counteſs of Saliſbury does not appear in his own edition. He hopes it may be ſome excuſe for his preſumption that the ſtory could not have been read without thoughts of the Counteſs of Saliſbury, though it had been dedicated to another. "To behold," he proceeds, "a "perſon *only* virtuous, ſtirs in us a prudent regret; "to behold a perſon *only* amiable to the ſight, "warms us with a religious indignation; but to turn "our eyes to a Counteſs of Saliſbury, gives us plea"ſure and improvement; it works a ſort of miracle, "occaſions the bias of our nature to fall off from "ſin, and makes our very ſenſes and affections "converts to our religion, and promoters of our "duty." His flattery was as ready for the other ſex as for ours, and was at leaſt as well adapted.

Auguſt the 27th, 1714, Pope writes to his friend Jervas, that he is juſt arrived from Oxford; that every one is much concerned for the Queen's death, but that no panegyricks are ready yet for the King.

Nothing like friendſhip has yet taken place between Pope and Young: for, ſoon after the event which Pope mentions, Young publiſhed a poem on the Queen's death, and his Majeſty's acceſſion to the throne. It is inſcribed to Addiſon, then ſecretary to the Lords Juſtices. Whatever were the obligations which he had formerly received from Anne, the poet appears to aim at ſomething of the ſame ſort from George. Of the poem the intention ſeems to have been, to ſhew that he had the ſame extravagant ſtrain of praiſe for a king as for a queen. To diſcover, at the very onſet of a foreigner's reign, that the Gods bleſs his new ſubjects in ſuch a king, is ſomething more than praiſe. Neither was this deemed one of his *excuſable pieces*. We do not find it in his works.

Young's father had been well acquainted with Lady Anne Wharton, the firſt wife of Thomas Wharton, Eſq. afterwards Marquis of Wharton; a lady celebrated for her poetical talents by Burnet and by Waller.

To the Dean of Sarum's viſitation ſermon, already mentioned, were added ſome verſes "by that excellent poeteſs Mrs. Anne Wharton," upon its being tranſlated into Engliſh, at the inſtance of Waller by Atwood. Wharton, after he became ennobled, did not drop the ſon of his old friend. In him, during the ſhort time he lived, Young found a patron, and in his diſſolute deſcendant a friend and a companion. The Marquis died in April, 1715. In the beginning of the next year the young Marquis ſet out upon his travels, from which he returned in about a twelvemonth. The beginning of 1717 carried him to Ireland;

land; where, ſays the Biographia, "on the ſcore of "his extraordinary qualities, he had the honour "done him of being admitted, though under age, "to take his ſeat in the Houſe of Lords."

With this unhappy character, it is not unlikely that Young went to Ireland. From his Letter to Richardſon on "Original Compoſition," it is clear he was, at ſome period of his life, in that country. "I "remember," ſays he, in that letter, ſpeaking of Swift, "as I and others were taking with him an "evening walk, about a mile out of Dublin, he ſtopped "ſhort; we paſſed on; but perceiving he did not follow "us, I went back, and found him fixed as a ſtatue, "and earneſtly gazing upward at a noble elm, which "in its uppermoſt branches was much withered and "decayed. Pointing at it, he ſaid, "I ſhall be like "that tree, I ſhall die at top." Is it not probable, that this viſit to Ireland was paid when he had an opportunity of going thither with his avowed friend and patron?

From "The Engliſhman" it appears that a tragedy by Young was in the theatre ſo early as 1713. Yet "Buſiris" was not brought upon Drury-Lane Stage till 1719. It was inſcribed to the Duke of Newcaſtle, "becauſe the late inſtances he had re"ceived of his Grace's undeſerved and uncommon "favour, in an affair of ſome conſequence, foreign "to the theatre, had taken from him the privilege of "chuſing a patron." The Dedication he afterwards ſuppreſſed.

"Buſiris" was followed in the year 1721 by "The "Revenge." He dedicated this famous tragedy to the Duke of Wharton. "Your Grace," ſays the Dedication,

Dedication, "has been pleafed to make yourfelf ac-"ceffary to the following fcenes, not only by fug-"gefting the moft beautiful incident in them, but by "making all poffible provifion for the fuccefs of the "whole."

That his Grace fhould have fuggefted the incident to which he alludes, whatever that incident might have been, is not unlikely. The laft mental exertion of the fuperannuated young man, in his quarters at Lerida, in Spain, was fome fcenes of a tragedy on the ftory of Mary Queen of Scots.

Dryden dedicated "Marriage à la Mode" to Wharton's infamous relation Rochefter; whom he acknowledges not only as the defender of his poetry, but as the promoter of his fortune. Young concludes his addrefs to Wharton thus—"My prefent fortune is "his bounty, and my future his care; which I will "venture to fay will be always remembered to his "honour, fince he, I know, intended his generofity "as an encouragement to merit, though through his "very pardonable partiality to one who bears him fo "fincere a duty and refpect, I happen to receive the "benefit of it." That he ever had fuch a patron as Wharton, Young took all the pains in his power to conceal from the world, by excluding this dedication from his works. He fhould have remembered that he at the fame time concealed his obligation to Wharton for *the moft beautiful incident* in what is furely not his leaft beautiful compofition. The paffage juft quoted is, in a poem afterwards addreffed to Walpole, literally copied:

Be

Be this thy partial ſmile from cenſure free!
'Twas meant for merit, though it fell on me.

While Young, who, in his " Love of Fame," complains grievouſly how often " dedications waſh " an Æthiop white," was painting an amiable Duke of Wharton in periſhable proſe, Pope was, perhaps, beginning to deſcribe the " ſcorn and wonder of his " days" in laſting verſe.

To the patronage of ſuch a character, had Young ſtudied men as much as Pope, he would have known how little to have truſted. Young, however, was certainly indebted to it for ſomething material; and the Duke's regard for Young, added to his " Luſt " of Praiſe," procured to All Soul's College a donation, which was not forgotten by the poet when he dedicated " The Revenge."

It will ſurprize you to ſee me cite ſecond Atkins, Caſe 136, Stiles *verſus* the Attorney General, March 14, 1740, as authority for the life of a poet. But biographers do not always find ſuch certain guides as the oaths of the perſons whom they record. Chancellor Hardwicke was to determine whether two annuities, granted by the Duke of Wharton to Young, were for legal conſiderations. One was dated the 24th of March, 1719, and accounted for his Grace's bounty in a ſtyle princely and commendable, if not legal—" conſidering that the publick good is ad- " vanced by the encouragement of learning and the " polite arts, and being pleaſed therein with the at- " tempts of Dr. Young, in conſideration thereof, " and of the love I bear him, &c." The other was dated the 10th of July, 1722.

 Young,

Young, on his examination, ſwore that he quitted the Exeter family, and refuſed an annuity of 100*l.* which had been offered him for life if he would continue tutor to Lord Burleigh, upon the preſſing ſolicitations of the Duke of Wharton, and his Grace's aſſurances of providing for him in a much more ample manner. It alſo appeared that the Duke had given him a bond for 600*l.* dated the 15th of March, 1721, in conſideration of his taking ſeveral journeys, and being at great expences, in order to be choſen member of the Houſe of Commons, at the Duke's deſire, and in conſideration of his not taking two livings of 200*l.* and 400*l.* in the gift of All Souls College, on his Grace's promiſes of ſerving and advancing him in the world.

Of his adventures in the Exeter family I am unable to give any account. The attempt to get into Parliament was at Cirenceſter, where Young ſtood a conteſted election. His grace diſcovered in him talents for oratory as well as for poetry. Nor was this judgement wrong. Young, after he took orders, became a very popular preacher, and was much followed for the grace and animation of his delivery. By his oratorical talents he was once in his life, according to the Biographia, deſerted. As he was preaching in his turn at St. James's, he plainly perceived it was out of his power to command the attention of his audience. This ſo affected the feelings of the preacher, that he ſat back in the pulpit, and burſt into tears. But we muſt purſue his poetical life.

In 1719 he lamented the death of Addiſon, in a Letter addreſſed to their common friend Tickell. For

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the ſecret hiſtory of the following lines, if they contain any, it is now vain to ſeek:

> *In joy once join'd*, in ſorrow, now, for years—
> Partner in grief, and brother of my tears,
> Tickell, accept this verſe, thy mournful due.

From your account of Tickell it appears that he and Young uſed to "communicate to each other "whatever verſes they wrote, even to the leaſt "things."

In 1719 appeared a "Paraphraſe on Part of the "Book of Job." Parker, to whom it is dedicated, had not long, by means of the ſeals, been qualified for a patron. Of this work the author's opinion may be known from his Letter to Curll: "You "ſeem, in the Collection you propoſe, to have "omitted what I think may claim the firſt place "in it; I mean 'a Tranſlation from Part of Job,' "printed by Mr. Tonſon." The Dedication, which was only ſuffered to appear in Mr. Tonſon's edition, while it ſpeaks with ſatisfaction of his preſent retirement, ſeems to make an unuſual ſtruggle to eſcape from retirement. But every one who ſings in the dark does not ſing from joy. It is addreſſed, in no common ſtrain of flattery, to a chancellor, of whom he clearly appears to have had no kind of knowledge.

Of his Satires it would not have been poſſible to fix the dates without the aſſiſtance of firſt editions, which, as you had occaſion to obſerve in your account of Dryden, are with difficulty found. We muſt then have referred to the poems, to diſcover when they were written. For theſe internal notes of time

we ſhould not have referred in vain. The firſt Satire laments, that "Guilt's chief foe in Addiſon is "fled." The ſecond, addreſſing himſelf, aſks,

Is thy ambition ſweating for a rhyme,
Thou unambitious fool, at this late time?
A fool at *forty* is a fool indeed.

The Satires were originally publiſhed ſeparately in folio, under the title of "The Univerſal Paſſion." Theſe paſſages fix the appearance of the firſt to about 1725, the time at which it came out. As Young ſeldom ſuffered his pen to dry, after he had once dipped it in poetry, we may conclude that he began his Satires ſoon after he had written the "Paraphraſe "on Job." The laſt Satire was certainly finiſhed in the beginning of the year 1726. In December 1725, the king, in his paſſage from Helvoetſluys, eſcaped with great difficulty from a ſtorm by landing at Rye; and the concluſion of the Satire turns the eſcape into a miracle, in ſuch an encomiaſtick ſtrain of compliment as poetry too often ſeeks to pay to royalty.

From the ſixth of theſe poems we learn,

Midſt empire's charms, how Carolina's heart
Glow'd with the love of virtue and of art:

ſince the grateful poet tells us, in the next couplet,

Her favour is diffus'd to that degree,
Exceſs of goodneſs! it has dawn'd on me.

Her Majeſty had ſtood godmother, and given her name, to the daughter of the lady whom Young mar-

ried in 1731; and had perhaps ſhewn ſome attention to Lady Elizabeth's future huſband.

The fifth Satire, "On Women," was not publiſhed till 1727; and the ſixth not till 1728.

To theſe Poems, when, in 1728, he gathered them into one publication, he prefixed a Preface; in which he obſerves, that "no man can converſe much in the "world, but at what he meets with he muſt either "be inſenſible or grieve, or be angry or ſmile. Now "to ſmile at it, and turn it into ridicule," he adds, "I think moſt eligible, as it hurts ourſelves leaſt, "and gives vice and folly the greateſt offence. "Laughing at the miſconduct of the world will, in "a great meaſure, eaſe us of any more diſagreeable "paſſion about it. One paſſion is more effectually "driven out by another than by reaſon, whatever "ſome teach." So wrote, and ſo of courſe thought, the lively and witty Satiriſt at the grave age of almoſt fifty, who, many years earlier in life, wrote the "Laſt Day." After all, Swift pronounced of theſe Satires, that they ſhould either have been more angry or more merry.

Is it not ſomewhat ſingular that Young preſerved, without any palliation, this Preface, ſo bluntly deciſive in favour of laughing at the world, in the ſame collection of his works which contains the mournful, angry, gloomy, "Night Thoughts!"

At the concluſion of the Preface he applies Plato's beautiful fable of the "Birth of Love" to modern poetry, with the addition, "that Poetry, like Love, "is a little ſubject to blindneſs, which makes her "miſtake her way to preferments and honours; and "that ſhe retains a dutiful admiration of her father's "family;

"family; but divides her favours, and generally "lives with her mother's relations." Poetry, it is true, did not lead Young to preferments or to honours; but was there not ſomething like blindneſs in the flattery which he ſometimes forced her, and her ſiſter Proſe, to utter? She was always, indeed, taught by him to entertain a moſt dutiful admiration of riches; but ſurely Young, though nearly related to Poetry, had no connexion with her whom Plato makes the mother of Love. That he could not well complain of being related to Poverty appears clearly from the frequent bounties which his gratitude records, and from the wealth which he left behind him. By "The Univerſal Paſſion" he acquired no vulgar fortune, more than three thouſand pounds. A conſiderable ſum had already been ſwallowed up in the South-Sea. For this loſs he took the vengeance of an author. His Muſe makes poetical uſe more than once of a South-Sea Dream.

It is related by Mr. Spence, in his Manuſcript Anecdotes, on the authority of Mr. Rawlinſon, that Young, upon the publication of his "Univerſal "Paſſion," received from the Duke of Grafton two thouſand pounds; and that, when one of his friends exclaimed, "Two thouſand pounds for a poem!" he ſaid it was the beſt bargain he ever made in his life, for the poem was worth four thouſand.

This ſtory may be true; but it ſeems to have been raiſed from the two anſwers of Lord Burghley and Sir Philip Sidney in Spenſer's Life.

After inſcribing his Satires, not perhaps without the hopes of preferments and honours, to ſuch names as the Duke of Dorſet, Mr. Dodington, Mr. Spencer

Spencer Compton, Lady Elizabeth Germain, and Sir Robert Walpole, he returns to plain panegyrick. In 1726 he addressed a poem to Sir Robert Walpole, of which the title sufficiently explains the intention. If Young must be acknowledged a ready celebrator, he did not endeavour, or did not choose, to be a lasting one. "The Instalment" is among the pieces he did not admit into the number of his *excuseable writings*. Yet it contains a couplet which pretends to pant after the power of bestowing immortality:

> Oh! how I long, enkindled by the theme,
> In deep eternity to launch thy name!

The bounty of the former reign seems to have been continued, possibly increased, in this. Whatever it might have been, the poet thought he deserved it; for he was not ashamed to acknowledge what, without his acknowledgement, would now perhaps never have been known:

> My breast, O Walpole, glows with grateful fire.
> The streams of royal bounty, turn'd by thee,
> Refresh the dry domains of poesy.

If the purity of modern patriotism will term Young a pensioner, it must at least be confessed he was a grateful one.

The reign of the new monarch was ushered in by Young with "Ocean, an Ode." The hint of it was taken from the royal speech, which recommended the increase and the encouragement of the seamen; that they might be "invited, rather than compelled by "force and violence, to enter into the service of their

"country;" a plan which humanity muſt lament that policy has not even yet been able, or willing, to carry into execution. Prefixed to the original publication were an "Ode to the King, Pater Patriæ," and an "Eſſay on Lyrick Poetry." It is but juſtice to confeſs, that he preſerved neither of them; and that the ode itſelf, which in the firſt edition, and in the laſt, conſiſts of ſeventy-three ſtanzas, in the author's own edition is reduced to forty-nine. Among the omitted paſſages is a "Wiſh," that concluded the poem, which few would have ſuſpected Young of forming; and of which few, after having formed it, would confeſs ſomething like their ſhame by ſuppreſſion.

It ſtood originally ſo high in the author's opinion, that he intituled the poem, "Ocean, an Ode. Concluding with a Wiſh." This wiſh conſiſts of thirteen ſtanzas. The firſt runs thus:

O may I *ſteal*
Along the *vale*
Of humble life, ſecure from foes!
My friend ſincere,
My judgement clear,
And gentle buſineſs my repoſe!

The three laſt ſtanzas are not more remarkable for juſt rhymes: but, altogether, they will make rather a curious page in the life of Young:

Prophetic ſchemes,
And golden dreams,
May I, unſanguine, caſt away!

Have

Have what I *have*,
And live, not *leave*,
Enamour'd of the preſent day!

My hours my own!
My faults unknown!
My chief revenue in content!
Then leave one *beam*
Of honeſt *fame!*
And ſcorn the labour'd monument!

Unhurt my urn
Till that great TURN
When mighty Nature's ſelf ſhall die,
Time ceaſe to glide,
With human pride,
Sunk in the ocean of eternity!

It is whimſical that he, who was ſoon to bid adieu to rhyme, ſhould fix upon a meaſure in which rhyme abounds even to ſatiety. Of this he ſaid, in his "Eſſay on Lyrick Poetry," prefixed to the poem —"For the more *harmony* likewiſe I choſe the fre-"quent return of rhyme, which laid me under great "difficulties. But difficulties overcome, give grace "and pleaſure. Nor can I account for the *pleaſure* "*of rhyme in general* (of which the moderns are too "fond) but from this truth." Yet the moderns ſurely deſerve not much cenſure for their fondneſs of what, by their own confeſſion, affords pleaſure, and abounds in harmony.

The next paragraph in his Eſſay did not occur to him when he talked of "that great turn" in the ſtanza juſt quoted. "But then the writer muſt take "care that the difficulty is overcome. That is, he

"must make rhyme consistent with as perfect sense "and expression, as could be expected if he was per- "fectly free from that shackle."

Another part of this Essay will convict the following stanza of, what every reader will discover in it, "involuntary burlesque:"

The northern blast,
The shatter'd mast,
The syrt, the whirlpool, and the rock,
The breaking spout,
The *stars gone out*,
The boiling streight, the monster's shock.

But would the English poets fill quite so many volumes, if all their productions were to be tried, like this, by an elaborate essay on each particular species of poetry of which they exhibit specimens?

If Young be not a lyrick poet, he is at least a critick in that sort of poetry; and, if his lyrick poetry can be proved bad, it was first proved so by his own criticism. This surely is candid.

Milbourne was styled by Pope "the fairest of cri- "ticks," only because he exhibited his own version of Virgil to be compared with Dryden's which he condemned, and with which every reader had it not otherwise in his power to compare it. Young was surely not the most unfair of poets for prefixing to a lyrick composition an Essay on Lyrick Poetry, so just and impartial as to condemn himself.

We shall soon come to a work, before which we find indeed no critical essay, but which disdains to shrink from the touchstone of the severest critick; and which certainly, as I remember to have heard you say, if it contain

contain ſome of the worſt, contains alſo ſome of the beſt things in the language.

Soon after the appearance of "Ocean," when he was almoſt fifty, Young entered into Orders. In April 1728, not long after he had put on the gown, he was appointed chaplain to George the Second.

The tragedy of "The Brothers," which was already in rehearſal, he immediately withdrew from the ſtage. The managers reſigned it with ſome reluctance to the delicacy of the new clergyman. The Epilogue to "The Brothers," the only appendages to any of his three plays which he added himſelf, is, I believe, the only one of the kind. He calls it an hiſtorical Epilogue. Finding that "Guilt's dreadful cloſe his narrow ſcene denied," he, in a manner, continues the tragedy in the Epilogue, and relates how Rome revenged the ſhade of Demetrius, and puniſhed Perſeus "for this night's deed."

Of Young's taking Orders ſomething is told by the biographer of Pope, which places the eaſineſs and ſimplicity of the poet in a ſingular light. When he determined on the Church, he did not addreſs himſelf to Sherlock, to Atterbury, or to Hare, for the beſt inſtructions in Theology; but to Pope, who, in a youthful frolick, adviſed the diligent peruſal of Thomas Aquinas. With this treaſure Young retired from interruption to an obſcure place in the ſuburbs. His poetical guide to godlineſs hearing nothing of him during half a year, and apprehending he might have carried the jeſt too far, ſought after him, and found him juſt in time to prevent what Ruffhead calls "an irretrievable derangement."

That attachment to his favourite ſtudy, which made him think a poet the ſureſt guide to his new profeſſion, left him little doubt whether poetry was the ſureſt path to its honours and preferments. Not long indeed after he took Orders, he publiſhed in proſe, 1728, "A true Eſtimate of Human Life," dedicated, notwithſtanding the Latin quotations with which it abounds, to the Queen; and a ſermon preached before the Houſe of Commons, 1729, on the martyrdom of King Charles, intituled, "An Apology for "Princes, or the Reverence due to Government." But the "Second Courſe," the counterpart of his "Eſtimate," without which it cannot be called "A "true Eſtimate," though in 1728 it was announced as "ſoon to be publiſhed," never appeared; and his old friends the Muſes were not forgotten. In 1730 he relapſed to poetry, and ſent into the world "Imperium Pelagi: a Naval Lyrick, written in imitation of Pindar's Spirit, occaſioned by his Majeſty's "Return from Hanover, September 1729, and the "ſucceeding Peace." It is inſcribed to the Duke of Chandos. In the Preface we are told, that the Ode is the moſt ſpirited kind of Poetry, and that the Pindarick is the moſt ſpirited kind of Ode. "This I "ſpeak," he adds, "with ſufficient candour, at my "own very great peril. But truth has an eternal title "to our confeſſion, though we are ſure to ſuffer by "it." Behold, again, the faireſt of poets. Young's "Imperium Pelagi" was ridiculed in Fielding's "Tom "Thumb;" but, let us not forget that it was one of his pieces which the author of the "Night Thoughts" deliberately refuſed to own.

Not

Not long after this Pindarick attempt, he publiſhed two Epiſtles to Pope, "concerning the Authors of "the Age," 1730. Of theſe poems one occaſion ſeems to have been an apprehenſion leſt, from the livelineſs of his ſatires, he ſhould not be deemed ſufficiently ſerious for promotion in the Church.

In July 1730 he was preſented by his College to the rectory of Welwyn in Hertfordſhire. In May 1731 he married Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the Earl of Lichfield, and widow of Colonel Lee. His connexion with this lady aroſe from his father's acquaintance, already mentioned, with Lady Anne Wharton, who was coheireſs of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley in Oxfordſhire. Poetry had lately been taught by Addiſon to aſpire to the arms of nobility, though not with extraordinary happineſs.

We may naturally conclude that Young now gave himſelf up in ſome meaſure to the comforts of his new connexion, and to the expectations of that preferment which he thought due to his poetical talents, or, at leaſt, to the manner in which they had ſo frequently been exerted.

The next production of his Muſe was "The Sea-"piece," in two odes.

Young enjoys the credit of what is called an "Ex-"tempore Epigram on Voltaire; who, when he was in England, ridiculed, in the company of the jealous Engliſh poet, Milton's allegory of "Sin and "Death"——

You are ſo witty, profligate, and thin,
At once we think thee Milton, Death, and Sin.

From the following paſſage in the poetical Dedication of his "Sea-piece" to Voltaire, it ſeems that this extemporaneous reproof, if it muſt be extemporaneous (for what few will now affirm Voltaire to have deſerved any reproof), was ſomething longer than a diſtich, and ſomething more gentle than the diſtich juſt quoted.

> No ſtranger, Sir, though born in foreign climes.
> On *Dorſet* downs, when Milton's page,
> With Sin and Death provok'd thy rage,
> Thy rage provok'd, who ſooth'd with *gentle* rhymes?

By "Dorſet downs" he probably meant Mr. Dodington's ſeat. In Pitt's Poems is "An Epiſtle to "Dr. Edward Young, at Eaſtbury in Dorſetſhire, "on the Review at Sarum, 1722."

> While with your Dodington retir'd you ſit,
> Charm'd with his flowing Burgundy and wit, &c.

Thomſon, in his Autumn, addreſſing Mr. Dodington, calls his ſeat the ſeat of the Muſes,

> Where, in the ſecret bower and winding walk,
> For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay.

The praiſes Thomſon beſtows but a few lines before on Philips, the ſecond

> Who nobly durſt, in rhyme-unfetter'd verſe,
> With Britiſh freedom ſing the Britiſh ſong,

added to Thomſon's example and ſucceſs, might perhaps induce Young, as we ſhall ſee preſently, to write his great work without rhyme.

In 1734 he published "The Foreign Address, or "the best Argument for Peace, occasioned by the "British Fleet and the Posture of Affairs. Written "in the Character of a Sailor." It is not to be found in the author's four volumes.

He now appears to have given up all hopes of overtaking Pindar, and perhaps at last resolved to turn his ambition to some original species of poetry. This poem concludes with a formal farewel to Ode, which few of Young's readers will regret:

> My shell, which Clio gave, which *Kings applaud*,
> Which Europe's bleeding Genius call'd abroad,
> Adieu!

In a species of poetry altogether his own, he next tried his skill, and succeeded.

Of his wife he was deprived in 1741. Lady Elibabeth had lost, after her marriage with Young, an amiable daughter, by her former husband, just after she was married to Mr. Temple, son of Lord Palmerston. Mr. Temple did not long remain after his wife, though he was married a second time to a daughter of Sir John Barnard's, whose son is the present peer. Mr. and Mrs. Temple have generally been considered as Philander and Narcissa. From the great friendship which constantly subsisted between Mr. Temple and Young, as well as from other circumstances, it is probable that the poet had both him and Mrs. Temple in view for these characters; though at the same time some passages respecting Philander do not appear to suit either Mr. Temple or any other person with whom Young was known to be connected or acquainted, while all the circumstances relating to Narcissa

cissa have been constantly found applicable to Young's daughter-in-law.

At what short intervals the poet tells us he was wounded by the deaths of the three persons particularly lamented, none that has read the "Night "Thoughts" (and who has not read them?) needs to be informed.

> Insatiate Archer! could not one suffice?
> Thy shaft flew thrice; and thrice my peace was slain;
> And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.

Yet how is it possible that Mr. and Mrs. Temple and Lady Elizabeth Young could be these three victims, over whom Young has hitherto been pitied for having to pour the "Midnight Sorrows" of his religious poetry? Mrs. Temple died in 1736; Mr. Temple four years afterwards in 1740; and the poet's wife seven months after Mr. Temple, in 1741. How could the insatiate Archer thrice slay his peace, in these three persons, "ere thrice the moon had "fill'd her horn?"

But in the short Preface to "The Complaint" he seriously tells us, "that the occasion of this poem "was real, not fictitious; and that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on "the thought of the writer." It is probable, therefore, that in these three contradictory lines, the poet complains more than the father-in-law, the friend, or the widower.

Whatever names belong to these facts, or, if the names be those generally supposed, whatever heightening a poet's sorrow may have given the facts; to the sorrow Young felt from them, religion and morality

rality are indebted for the "Night Thoughts." There is a pleaſure ſure in ſadneſs which mourners only know!

Of theſe poems the two or three firſt have been peruſed perhaps more eagerly and more frequently than the reſt. When he got as far as the fourth or fifth, his original motive for taking up the pen was anſwered; his grief was naturally either diminiſhed or exhauſted. We ſtill find the ſame pious poet; but we hear leſs of Philander and Narciſſa, and leſs of the mourner whom he loved to pity.

Mrs. Temple died of a conſumption at Lyons, in her way to Nice, the year after her marriage; that is, when poetry relates the fact, "in her bridal hour." It is more than poetically true, that Young accompanied her to the Continent:

> I flew, I ſnatch'd her from the rigid North,
> And bore her nearer to the ſun.

But in vain. Her funeral was attended with the difficulties painted in ſuch animated colours in "Night the Third." After her death, the remainder of the party paſſed the enſuing winter at Nice.

The poet ſeems perhaps in theſe compoſitions to dwell with more melancholy on the death of Philander and Narciſſa, than of his wife. But it is only for this reaſon. He who runs and reads may remember, that in the "Night Thoughts" Philander and Narciſſa are often mentioned and often lamented. To recollect lamentations over the author's wife, the memory muſt have been charged with diſtinct paſſages. This lady brought him one child, Frede-

 rick,

ſick, now living, to whom the Prince of Wales was godfather.

That domeſtick grief is, in the firſt inſtance, to be thanked for theſe ornaments to our language, it is impoſſible to deny. Nor would it be common hardineſs to contend, that worldly diſcontent had no hand in theſe joint productions of poetry and piety. Yet am I by no means ſure that, at any rate, we ſhould not have had ſomething of the ſame colour from Young's pencil, notwithſtanding the liveline ſs of his ſatires. In ſo long a life, cauſes for diſcontent and occaſions for grief muſt have occurred. It is not clear to me that his Muſe was not ſitting upon the watch for the firſt which happened. "Night Thoughts" were not uncommon to her, even when firſt ſhe viſited the poet, and at a time when he himſelf was remarkable neither for gravity nor gloomineſs. In his "Laſt Day," almoſt his earlieſt poem, he calls her "The Melancholy Maid,"

——— whom diſmal ſcenes delight,
Frequent at tombs and in the realms of Night.

In the prayer which concludes the ſecond book of the ſame poem, he ſays—

—Oh! permit the gloom of ſolemn night
To ſacred thought may forcibly invite.
Oh! how divine to tread the milky way,
To the bright palace of Eternal Day!

When Young was writing a tragedy, Grafton is ſaid by Spence to have ſent him a human ſkull, with a candle in it, as a lamp; and the poet is reported to have uſed it.

What

What he calls "The *true* Eſtimate of Human "Life," which has already been mentioned, exhibits only the wrong ſide of the tapeſtry; and, being aſked why he did not ſhew the right, he is ſaid to have replied, that he could not. By others it has been told me that this was finiſhed; but that, before there exiſted any copy, it was torn in pieces by a lady's monkey.

Still, is it altogether fair to dreſs up the poet for the man, and to bring the gloomineſs of the "Night "Thoughts" to prove the gloomineſs of Young, and to ſhew that his genius, like the genius of Swift, was in ſome meaſure the ſullen inſpiration of diſcontent?

From them who anſwer in the affirmative it ſhould not be concealed that, though "Inviſibilia non deci- "piunt" appeared upon a deception in Young's grounds, and "Ambulantes in horto audiêrunt vo- "cem Dei" on a building in his garden, his pariſh was indebted to the good humour of the author of the "Night Thoughts" for an aſſembly and a bowling-green.

Whether you think with me, I know not; but the famous "De mortuis nil niſi bonum" always appeared to me to ſavour more of female weakneſs than of manly reaſon. He that has too much feeling to ſpeak ill of the dead, who, if they cannot defend themſelves, are at leaſt ignorant of his abuſe, will not heſitate by the moſt wanton calumny to deſtroy the quiet, the reputation, the fortune, of the living. Yet cenſure is not heard beneath the tomb, any more than praiſe. "De mortuis nil niſi verum "—De vivis nil niſi bonum"—would approach much

nearer

nearer to good ſenſe. After all, the few handfuls of remaining duſt which once compoſed the body of the author of the "Night Thoughts" feel not much concern whether Young paſs now for a man of ſorrow, or for a "a fellow of infinite jeſt." To this favour muſt come the whole family of Yorick. His immortal part, wherever that now dwell, is ſtill leſs ſolicitous on this head.

But to a ſon of worth and ſenſibility it is of ſome little conſequence whether contemporaries believe, and poſterity be taught to believe, that his debauched and reprobate life caſt a Stygian gloom over the evening of his father's days, ſaved him the trouble of feigning a character completely deteſtable, and ſucceeded at laſt in bringing his "grey hairs with "ſorrow to the grave."

The humanity of the world, little ſatisfied with inventing perhaps a melancholy diſpoſition for the father, proceeds next to invent an argument in ſupport of their invention, and chooſes that Lorenzo ſhould be Young's own ſon. The Biographia, and every account of Young pretty roundly aſſert this to be the fact; of the abſolute impoſſibility of which, the Biographia itſelf, in particular dates, contains undeniable evidence. Readers I know there are of a ſtrange turn of mind, who will hereafter peruſe the "Night Thoughts" with leſs ſatisfaction; who will wiſh they had ſtill been deceived; who will quarrel with me for diſcovering that no ſuch character as their Lorenzo ever yet diſgraced human nature, or broke a father's heart. Yet would theſe admirers of the ſublime and terrible be offended; ſhould you ſet them down for cruel and for ſavage.

Of

Of this report, inhuman to the furviving fon, if it be true, in proportion as the character of Lorenzo is diabolical, where are we to find the proof? Perhaps it is clear from the poems.

From the firft line to the laft of the "Night "Thoughts," no one expreffion can be difcovered which betrays any thing like the father. In the "Second Night" I find an expreffion which betrays fomething elfe; that Lorenzo was his friend; one, it is poffible, of his former companions; one of the Duke of Wharton's fet. The Poet ftyles him "gay friend;" an appellation not very natural from a pious incenfed father to fuch a being as he paints Lorenzo, and that being his fon.

But let us fee how he has fketched this dreadful portrait, from the fight of fome of whofe features the artift himfelf muft have turned away with horror. A fubject more fhocking, if his only child really fat to him, than the crucifixion of Michael Angelo; upon the horrid ftory told of which, Young compofed a fhort Poem of fourteen lines in the early part of his life, which he did not think deferved to be republifhed.

In the "Firft Night," the addrefs to the Poet's fuppofed fon is,

> Lorenzo, Fortune makes her court to thee.

In the "Fifth Night"—

> And burns Lorenzo ftill for the fublime
> Of life? to hang his airy neft on high?

Is this a picture of the fon of the rector of Welwyn?

"Eighth

"Eighth Night"—

> In foreign realms (for thou haſt travell'd far)—

which even now does not apply to his ſon.

In "Night Five"—

> So wept Lorenzo fair Clariſſa's fate;
> Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes;
> And died to give him, orphan'd in his birth!

At the beginning of the "Fifth Night" we find—

> Lorenzo, to recriminate is juſt,
> I grant the man is vain who writes for praiſe.

But, to cut ſhort all enquiry; if any one of theſe paſſages, if any paſſage in the poems, be applicable, my friend ſhall paſs for Lorenzo. The ſon of the author of the "Night Thoughts" was not old enough, when they were written, to recriminate, or to be a father. The "Night Thoughts" were begun immediately after the mournful event of 1741. The firſt "Nights" appear, in the books of the company of Stationers, as the property of Robert Dodſley, in 1742. The Preface to "Night Seven" is dated July the 7th, 1744. The marriage, in conſequence of which the ſuppoſed Lorenzo was born, happened in May 1731. Young's child was not born till June 1733. In 1741 this Lorenzo, this finiſhed infidel, this father to whoſe education Vice had for ſome years put the laſt hand, was only eight years old.

An anecdote of this cruel ſort, ſo open to contradiction, ſo impoſſible to be true, who could propagate? Thus eaſily are blaſted the reputation of the living and of the dead.

Who, then, was Lorenzo? exclaim the readers I have mentioned. If we cannot be ſure that he was his ſon, which would have been finely terrible, was he not his nephew, his couſin?

Theſe are queſtions which I do not pretend to anſwer. For the ſake of human nature, I could wiſh Lorenzo to have been only the creation of the Poet's fancy: like the Quintus of Anti Lucretius, "quo nomine," ſays Polignac, "quemvis Atheum "intellige." That this was the caſe, many expreſſions in the "Night Thoughts" would ſeem to prove, did not a paſſage in "Night Eight" appear to ſhew that he had ſomebody in his eye for the groundwork at leaſt of the painting. Lovelace or Lorenzo may be feigned characters; but a writer does not feign a name of which he only gives the initial letter:

> Tell not Caliſta. She will laugh thee dead,
> Or ſend thee to her hermitage with L——.

The Biographia, not ſatisfied with pointing out the ſon of Young, in that ſon's life-time, as his father's Lorenzo, travels out of its way into the hiſtory of the ſon, and tells of his having been forbidden his college at Oxford for miſbehaviour. How ſuch anecdotes, were they true, tend to illuſtrate the life of Young, it is not eaſy to diſcover. Was the ſon of the author of the "Night Thoughts," indeed, forbidden his college for a time, at one of our Univerſities? The author of "Paradiſe Loſt" is by ſome ſuppoſed to have been diſgracefully ejected from the other. From juvenile follies who is free? But, whatever the Biographia chooſes to relate, the ſon of Young experienced no diſmiſſion from his college either laſting or temporary.

 Yet,

Yet, were nature to indulge him with a ſecond youth, and to leave him at the ſame time the experience of that which is paſt, he would probably ſpend it differently—who would not?—he would certainly be the occaſion of leſs uneaſineſs to his father. But, from the ſame experience, he would as certainly, in the ſame caſe, be treated differently by his father.

Young was a poet: poets, with reverence be it ſpoken, do not make the beſt parents. Fancy and imagination ſeldom deign to ſtoop from their heights; always ſtoop unwillingly to the low level of common duties. Aloof from vulgar life, they purſue their rapid flight beyond the ken of mortals, and deſcend not to earth but when compelled by neceſſity. The proſe of ordinary occurrences is beneath the dignity of poets.

He who is connected with the Author of the "Night Thoughts," only by veneration for the Poet and the Chriſtian, may be allowed to obſerve, that Young is one of thoſe, concerning whom, as you remark in your account of Addiſon, it is proper rather to ſay "nothing that is falſe than all that is "true."

But the ſon of Young would almoſt ſooner, I know, paſs for a Lorenzo, than ſee himſelf vindicated, at the expence of his father's memory, from follies which, if it may be thought blameable in a boy to have committed them, it is ſurely praiſeworthy in a man to lament, and certainly not only unneceſſary but cruel in a biographer to record.

Of the "Night Thoughts," notwithſtanding their author's profeſſed retirement, all are inſcribed to great or to growing names. He had not yet weaned

him-

himself from Earls and Dukes, from the Speakers of the House of Commons, Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, and Chancellors of the Exchequer. In "Night Eight" the politician plainly betrays himself——

Think no post needful that demands a knave:
When late our civil helm was shifting hands,
So P—— thought: think better if you can.

Yet it must be confessed, that at the conclusion of "Night Nine," weary perhaps of courting earthly patrons, he tells his soul,

Henceforth
Thy *patron* he, whose diadem has dropt
You gems of Heaven; Eternity thy prize;
And leave the racers of the world their own.

The "Fourth Night" was addressed by "a much-"indebted Muse" to the Honourable Mr. Yorke, now Lord Hardwicke; who meant to have laid the Muse under still greater obligation, by the living of Shenfield in Essex, if it had become vacant.

The "First Night" concludes with this passage——

Dark, though not blind, like thee, Meonides;
Or Milton, thee. Ah! could I reach your strain;
Or his who made Meonides our own!
Man too he sung. Immortal man I sing.
Oh had he prest his theme, pursu'd the track
Which opens out of darkness into day!
Oh had he mounted on his wing of fire,
Soar'd, where I sink, and sung immortal man—
How had it blest mankind, and rescu'd me!

To the author of these lines was dedicated, in 1756, the first volume of an "Essay on the Writings

"and Genius of Pope," which attempted, whether justly or not, to pluck from Pope his "Wing of "Fire," and to reduce him to a rank at least one degree lower than the first class of English poets. If Young accepted and approved the dedication, he countenanced this attack upon the fame of him whom he invokes as his Muse.

Part of "paper-sparing" Pope's Third Book of the "Odyssey," deposited in the Museum, is written upon the back of a letter signed "E. Young," which is clearly the hand-writing of our Young. The Letter, dated only May the 2d, seems obscure; but there can be little doubt that the friendship he requests was a literary one, and that he had the highest literary opinion of Pope. The request was a prologue, I am told.

"Dear Sir, May the 2d.

"Having been often from home, I know not if "you have done me the favour of calling on me. "But, be that as it will, I much want that instance "of your friendship I mentioned in my last; a friend-"ship I am very sensible I can receive from no one "but yourself. I should not urge this thing so much "but for very particular reasons; nor can you be at "a loss to conceive how a 'trifle of this nature' may "be of serious moment to me; and while I am in "hopes of the great advantage of your advice about "it, I shall not be so absurd as to make any further "step without it. I know you are much engaged, "and only hope to hear of you at your entire leisure.

"I am, Sir, your most faithful

"and obedient servant,

"E. YOUNG."

Nay,

Nay, even after Pope's death, he ſays, in "Night "Seven,"

Pope, who could'ſt make immortals, art thou dead?

Either the "Eſſay," then, was dedicated to a patron who diſapproved its doctrine, which I have been told by the author was not the caſe; or Young appears, in his old age, to have bartered for a dedication an opinion entertained of his friend through all that part of life when he muſt have been beſt able to form opinions.

From this account of Young, two or three ſhort paſſages, which ſtand almoſt together in "Night Four," ſhould not be excluded. They afford a picture, by his own hand, from the ſtudy of which my readers may chooſe to form their own opinion of the features of his mind and the complexion of his life.

Ah me! the dire effect
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long;
Of old ſo gracious (and let that ſuffice),
My very maſter knows me not.
I've been ſo long remember'd, I'm forgot.

*

When in his courtiers ears I pour my plaint,
They drink it as the Nectar of the Great;
And ſqueeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.

*

Twice told the period ſpent on ſtubborn Troy,
Court-favour, yet untaken, I *beſiege.*

*

If this ſong lives, Poſterity ſhall know
One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,

Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too late;
Nor on his ſubtle death-bed plann'd his ſcheme
For future vacancies in church or ſtate.

Deduct from the writer's age " twice told the period " ſpent on ſtubborn Troy," and you will ſtill leave him more than forty when he ſate down to to the miſerable ſiege of court-favour. He has before told us

" A fool at forty is a fool indeed."

After all, the ſiege ſeems to have been raiſed only in conſequence of what the General thought his " death-" bed."

By theſe extraordinary Poems, written after he was ſixty, of which I have been led to ſay ſo much, I hope, by the wiſh of doing juſtice to the living and the dead, it was the deſire of Young to be principally known. He entitled the four volumes which he publiſhed himſelf, " The works of the Author of " the Night Thoughts." While it is remembered that from theſe he excluded many of his writings, let it not be forgotten that the rejected pieces contained nothing prejudicial to the cauſe of virtue, or of religion. Were every thing that Young ever wrote to be publiſhed, he would only appear perhaps in a leſs reſpectable light as a poet, and more deſpicable as a dedicator; he would not paſs for a worſe Chriſtian, or for a worſe man. This enviable praiſe is due to Young. Can it be claimed by every writer? His dedications, after all, he had perhaps no right to ſuppreſs. They all, I believe, ſpeak, not a little to the credit of his gratitude, of favours received; and I know not whether the author, who has

has once ſolemnly printed an acknowledgement of a favour, ſhould not always print it.

Is it to the credit or to the diſcredit of Young, as a poet, that of his "Night Thoughts" the French are particularly fond?

Of the "Epitaph on Lord Aubrey Beauclerk," dated 1740, all I know is, that I find it in the late body of Engliſh Poetry, and that I am ſorry to find it there.

Notwithſtanding the farewel which he ſeemed to have taken in the "Night Thoughts" of every thing which bore the leaſt reſemblance to ambition, he dipped again in politicks. In 1745 he wrote "Re-"flections on the publick Situation of the Kingdom, "addreſſed to the Duke of Newcaſtle;" indignant, as it appears, to behold

— a pope-bred Princeling crawl aſhore,
And whiſtle cut throats, with thoſe ſwords that ſcrap'd
Their barren rocks for wretched ſuſtenance,
To cut his paſſage to the Britiſh throne.

This political poem might be called a "Night "Thought." Indeed it was originally printed as the concluſion of the "Night Thoughts," though he did not gather it with his other works.

Prefixed to the ſecond edition of Howe's "Devout "Meditations" is a Letter from Young, dated January 19, 1752, addreſſed to Archibald Macauly, Eſq.; thanking him for the book, which he ſays "he ſhall never lay far out of his reach; for a "greater demonſtration of a ſound head and a ſin-"cere heart he never ſaw."

In 1753, when "The Brothers" had lain by him above thirty years, it appeared upon the ſtage. If any part of his fortune had been acquired by ſervility of adulation, he now determined to deduct from it no inconſiderable ſum, as a gift to the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel. To this ſum he hoped the profits of "The Brothers" would amount. In his calculation he was deceived; but by the bad ſucceſs of his play the Society was not a loſer. The author made up the ſum he originally intended, which was a thouſand pounds, from his own pocket.

The next performance which he printed was a proſe publication, entituled, "The Centaur not fabulous, "in ſix Letters to a Friend on the Life in Vogue." The concluſion is dated November 29, 1754. In the third Letter is deſcribed the death-bed of the "gay, young, noble, ingenious, accompliſhed, and "moſt wretched Altamont." His laſt words were— "My principles have poiſoned my friend, my ex-"travagance has beggared my boy, my unkindneſs "has murdered my wife!" Either Altamont and Lorenzo were the twin production of fancy, or Young was unlucky enough to know two characters who bore no little reſemblance to each other in perfection of wickedneſs. Report has been accuſtomed to call Altamont Lord Euſton.

"The Old Man's Relapſe," occaſioned by an Epiſtle to Walpole, if written by Young, which I much doubt, muſt have been written very late in life. It has been ſeen, I am told, in a Miſcellany publiſhed thirty years before his death. In 1758, he exhibited "The Old Man's Relapſe" in more than

words, by again becoming a dedicator, and publishing a sermon addressed to the King.

The lively Letter in prose, on "Original Composition," addressed to Richardson, the author of Clarissa, appeared in 1759. Though he despair "of breaking through the frozen obstructions of "age and care's incumbent cloud, into that flow of "thought and brightness of expression which subjects so polite require;" yet is it more like the production of untamed, unbridled youth, than of jaded fourscore. Some sevenfold volumes put him in mind of Ovid's sevenfold channels of the Nile at the conflagration:

——————— ostia septem
Pulverulenta vocant, septem sine flumine valles.

Such leaden labours are like Lycurgus's iron money, which was so much less in value than in bulk, that it required barns for strong boxes, and a yoke of oxen to draw five hundred pounds.

If there is a famine of invention in the land, we must travel, he says, like Joseph's brethren, far for food; we must visit the remote and rich antients. But an inventive genius may safely stay at home; that, like the widow's cruse, is divinely replenished from within, and affords us a miraculous delight. He asks why it should seem altogether impossible, that Heaven's latest editions of the human mind may be the most correct and fair? And Jonson, he tells us, was very learned, as Sampson was very strong, to his own hurt. Blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himself under it.

Is this "care's incumbent cloud," or "the frozen "obſtructions of age?"

In this letter Pope is ſeverely cenſured for his "fall from Homer's numbers, free as air, lofty and "harmonious as the ſpheres, into childiſh ſhackles "and tinkling ſounds; for putting Achilles into "petticoats a ſecond time:" but we are told that the dying ſwan talked over an Epic plan with Young a few weeks before his deceaſe.

Young's chief inducement to write this letter was, as he confeſſes, that he might erect a monumental marble to the memory of an old friend. He, who employed his pious pen for almoſt the laſt time in thus doing juſtice to the exemplary death-bed of Addiſon, might probably, at the cloſe of his own life, afford no unuſeful leſſon for the deaths of others.

In the poſtſcript, he writes to Richardſon, that he will ſee in his next how far Addiſon is an original. But no other letter appears.

The few lines which ſtand in the laſt edition, as "ſent by Lord Melcombe to Dr. Young, not long "before his Lordſhip's death," were indeed ſo ſent, but were only an introduction to what was there meant by "The Muſe's lateſt Spark." The poem is neceſſary, whatever may be its merit, ſince the Preface to it is already printed. Lord Melcombe called his Tuſculum "La Trappe."

"Love thy country, wiſh it well,
Not with too intenſe a care,
'Tis enough, that, when it fell,
Thou its ruin didſt not ſhare.

Envy's

Envy's cenfure, Flattery's praife,
With unmov'd indifference view;
Learn to tread life's dangerous maze,
With unerring Virtue's clue.

Void of ftrong defire and fear,
Life's void ocean truft no more;
Strive thy little bark to fteer
With the tide, but near the fhore.

Thus prepar'd, thy fhorten'd fail
Shall, whene'er the winds increafe,
Seizing each propitious gale,
Waft thee to the Port of Peace.

Keep thy confcience from offence,
And tempeftuous paffions free,
So, when thou art call'd from hence,
Eafy fhall thy paffage be;

Eafy fhall thy paffage be,
Chearful thy allotted ftay,
Short the account 'twixt God and thee:
Hope fhall meet thee on the way:

Truth fhall lead thee to the gate,
Mercy's felf fhall let thee in,
Where its never-changing ftate
Full perfection fhall begin."

The Poem was accompanied by a Letter.

"*La Trappe*, the 27th of Oct. 1761.

"Dear Sir,

"You feemed to like the ode I fent you for your "amufement; I now fend it you as a prefent. If "you pleafe to accept of it, and are willing that "our friendfhip fhould be known when we are gone, "you

"you will be pleased to leave this among those of "your own papers that may possibly see the light by "a posthumous publication. God send us health "while we stay, and an easy journey!

"My dear Dr. Young,

"Yours, most cordially,

"MELCOMBE."

In 1762, a short time before his death, Young published "Resignation." Notwithstanding the manner in which it was really forced from him by the world, criticism has treated it with no common severity. If it shall be thought not to deserve the highest praise, on the other side of fourscore, by whom, except by Newton and by Waller, has praise been merited?

To Mrs. Montagu, the famous champion of Shakspeare, I am indebted for the history of "Resignation." Observing that Mrs. Boscawen, in the midst of her grief for the loss of the admiral, derived consolation from the perusal of the "Night "Thoughts," Mrs. Montagu proposed a visit to the author. From conversing with Young, Mrs. Boscawen derived still further consolation; and to that visit she and the world were indebted for this poem. It compliments Mrs. Montagu in the following lines:

Yet write I must. A Lady sues:
  How shameful her request!
My brain in labour with dull rhyme,
  Hers teeming with the best!

And

And again ——

> And friend you have, and I the ſame,
> Whoſe prudent, ſoft addreſs
> Will bring to life thoſe healing thoughts
> Which died in your diſtreſs.
>
> That friend, the ſpirit of my theme
> Extracting for your eaſe,
> Will leave to me the dreg, in thoughts
> Too common; ſuch as theſe.

By the ſame Lady I was enabled to ſay, in her own words, that Young's unbounded genius appeared to greater advantage in the companion than even in the author; that the Chriſtian was in him a character ſtill more inſpired, more enraptured, more ſublime, than the poet; and that, in his ordinary converſation,

> —— letting down the golden chain from high,
> He drew his audience upward to the ſky.

Notwithſtanding Young had ſaid, in his "Conjectures on original Compoſition." that "blank verſe is verſe unfallen, uncurſt; verſe reclaimed, re-inthroned in the true language of the Gods:" notwithſtanding he adminiſtered conſolation to his own grief in this immortal language, Mrs. Boſcawen was comforted in rhyme.

While the poet and the Chriſtian were applying this comfort, Young had himſelf occaſion for comfort, in conſequence of the ſudden death of Richardſon, who was printing the former part of the poem. Of Richardſon's death he ſays —

When

When Heaven would kindly ſet us free,
And earth's enchantment end;
It takes the moſt effectual means,
And robs us of a friend.

To "Reſignation" was prefixed an Apology for its appearance: to which more credit is due than to the generality of ſuch apologies, from Young's unuſual anxiety that no more productions of his old age ſhould diſgrace his former fame. In his will, dated February 1760, he deſires of his executors, *in a particular manner*, that all his manuſcript books and writings whatever might be burned, except his book of accounts.

In September 1764, he added a kind of codicil, wherein he made it his dying intreaty to his houſekeeper, to whom he left 1000*l.* "that all his manuſcripts might be deſtroyed as ſoon as he was dead, which would greatly oblige her deceaſed *friend*."

It may teach mankind the uncertainty of worldly friendſhips, to know that Young, either by ſurviving thoſe he loved, or by outliving their affections, could only recollect the names of two *friends*, his houſekeeper and a hatter, to mention in his will; and it may ſerve to repreſs that teſtamentary pride, which too often ſeeks for ſounding names and titles, to be informed that the author of the "Night Thoughts" did not bluſh to leave a legacy to his "friend Henry Stevens, a hatter at the Temple-gate." Of theſe two remaining friends, one went before Young. But, at eighty-four, "where," as he aſks in

in *The Centaur*, "is that world into which we were "born?"

The ſame humility which marked a hatter and a houſekeeper for the friends of the author of the "Night Thoughts," had before beſtowed the ſame title on his footman, in an epitaph in his "Church-"yard" upon James Baker, dated 1749; which I am glad to find in the late collection of his works.

Young and his houſekeeper were ridiculed, with more ill-nature than wit, in a kind of novel publiſhed by Kidgell in 1755, called "The Card," under the names of Dr. Elwes and Mrs. Fuſby.

In April 1765, at an age to which few attain, a period was put to the life of Young.

He had performed no duty for three or four years, but he retained his intellects to the laſt.

Much is told in the "Biographia," which I know not to have been true, of the manner of his burial; of the maſter and children of a charity-ſchool, which he founded in his pariſh, who neglected to attend their benefactor's corpſe; and of a bell which was not cauſed to toll as often as upon thoſe occaſions bells uſually toll. Had that humanity, which is here laviſhed upon things of little conſequence either to the living or to the dead, been ſhewn in its proper place to the living, I ſhould have had leſs to ſay about Lorenzo. They who lament that theſe misfortunes happened to Young, forget the praiſe he beſtows upon Socrates, in the Preface to "Night Seven," for reſenting his friend's requeſt about his funeral.

During ſome part of his life Young was abroad, but I have not been able to learn any particulars.

In his ſeventh Satire he ſays,

> When, after battle, I the field have SEEN
> Spread o'er with ghaſtly ſhapes which once were *men.*

It is known alſo, that from this or from ſome other field he once wandered into the camp with a claſſick in his hand, which he was reading intently; and had ſome difficulty to prove that he was only an abſent poet, and not a ſpy.

The curious reader of Young's life will naturally inquire to what it was owing, that though he lived almoſt forty years after he took Orders, which included one whole reign uncommonly long, and part of another, he was never thought worthy of the leaſt preferment. The author of the "Night Thoughts" ended his days upon a Living which came to him from his College without any favour, and to which he probably had an eye when he determined on the Church. To ſatisfy curioſity of this kind is, at this diſtance of time, far from eaſy. The parties themſelves know not often, at the inſtant, why they are neglected, or why they are preferred. The neglect of Young is by ſome aſcribed to his having attached himſelf to the Prince of Wales, and to his having preached an offenſive ſermon at St. James's. It has been told me that he had two hundred a year in the late reign, by the patronage of Walpole; and that, whenever any one reminded the King of Young, the only anſwer was, "he has a penſion." All the light thrown on this inquiry, by the following Letter from Secker, only ſerves to ſhew at what a late period of life the author of the "Night Thoughts" ſolicited preferment:

"Deanery

"Deanery of St. Paul's, July 8, 1758.

"Good Dr. Young,

"I have long wondered, that more ſuitable notice of your great merit hath not been taken by "perſons in power. But how to remedy the omiſſion "I ſee not. No encouragement hath ever been given "me to mention things of this nature to his Majeſty. "And therefore, in all likelihood, the only conſequence of doing it would be weakening the little "influence which elſe I may poſſibly have on ſome "other occaſions. Your fortune and your reputation "ſet you above the need of advancement; and your "ſentiments, above that concern for it, on your own "account, which, on that of the Public, is ſincerely "felt by

"Your loving Brother,

"Tho. Cant."

At laſt, at the age of fourſcore, he was appointed, in 1761, Clerk of the Cloſet to the Princeſs Dowager.

One obſtacle muſt have ſtood not a little in the way of that preferment after which his whole life ſeems to have panted. Though he took Orders, he never intirely ſhook off Politicks. He was always the Lion of his maſter Milton, "pawing to get free his hinder parts." By this conduct, if he gained ſome friends, he made many enemies.

Again: Young was a poet; and again, with reverence be it ſpoken, poets by profeſſion do not always make the beſt clergymen. If the author of the "Night Thoughts" compoſed many ſermons, he did not oblige the publick with many.

 Beſides,

Besides, in the latter part of life, Young was fond of holding himself out for a man retired from the world. But he seemed to have forgotten that the same verse which contains "oblitus meorum," contains also "obliviscendus & illis." The brittle chain of worldly friendship and patronage is broken as effectually, when one goes beyond the length of it, as when the other does. To the vessel which is sailing from the shore, it only appears that the shore also recedes; in life it is truly thus. He who retires from the world will find himself, in reality, deserted as fast, if not faster, by the world. The publick is not to be treated as the coxcomb treats his mistress; to be threatened with desertion, in order to increase fondness.

Young seems to have been taken at his word. Notwithstanding his frequent complaints of being neglected, no hand was reached out to pull him from that retirement of which he declared himself enamoured. Alexander assigned no palace for the residence of Diogenes, who boasted his surly satisfaction with his tub.

Of the domestick manners and petty habits of the author of the "Night Thoughts," I hoped to have given you an account from the best authority: but who shall dare to say, To-morrow I will be wise or virtuous, or to-morrow I will do a particular thing? Upon enquiring for his house-keeper, I learned that she was buried two days before I reached the town of her abode.

In a Letter from Tscharner, a noble foreigner, to Count Haller, Tscharner says, he has lately spe four days with Young at Welwyn, where the aut

tastes

tastes all the ease and pleasure mankind can desire. "Every thing about him shews the man, each individual being placed by rule. All is neat without "art. He is very pleasant in conversation, and extremely polite."

This, and more, may possibly be true; but Tscharner's was a first visit, a visit of curiosity and admiration, and a visit which the author expected.

Of Edward Young an anecdote which wanders among readers is not true, that he was Fielding's Parson Adams. The original of that famous painting was William Young, who was a clergyman. He supported an uncomfortable existence by translating for the booksellers from Greek; and, if he did not seem to be his own friend, was at least no man's enemy. Yet the facility with which this report has gained belief in the world argues, were it not sufficiently known, that the author of the "Night Thoughts" bore some resemblance to Adams.

The attention which Young bestowed upon the perusal of books is not unworthy imitation. When any passage pleased him, he appears to have folded down the leaf. On these passages he bestowed a second reading. But the labours of man are too frequently vain. Before he returned to much of what he had once approved, he died. Many of his books, which I have seen, are by those notes of approbation so swelled beyond their real bulk, that they will hardly shut.

> What though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame!
> Earth's highest station ends in *Here he lies!*
> And *dust to dust* concludes her noblest song!

The author of these lines is not without his *Hic jacet.*

By the good sense of his son, it contains none of that praise which no marble can make the bad or the foolish merit; which, without the direction of a stone or a turf, will find its way, sooner or later, to the deserving.

M. S.
Optimi parentis
EDWARDI YOUNG, LL. D.
Hujus Ecclesiæ rect.
Et Elizabethæ
fæm. prænob.
Conjugis ejus amantissimæ
Pio & gratissimo animo
Hoc marmor posuit
F. Y.
Filius superstes.

Is it not strange that the author of the "Night "Thoughts" has inscribed no monument to the memory of his lamented wife? Yet, what marble will endure as long as the poems?

Such, my good friend, is the account which I have been able to collect of the great Young. That it may be long before any thing like what I have just transcribed be necessary for you, is the sincere wish of,

Dear Sir,
Your greatly obliged Friend,
HERBERT CROFT, Jun.

Lincoln's Inn,
Sept. 1780.

P. S.

P. S. This account of Young was ſeen by you in manuſcript, you know, Sir; and, though I could not prevail on you to make any alteration, you inſiſted on ſtriking out one paſſage, becauſe it ſaid, that, if I did not wiſh you to live long for your ſake, I did for the ſake of myſelf and of the world. But this poſtſcript you will not ſee before the printing of it; and I will ſay here, in ſpite of you, how I feel myſelf honoured and bettered by your friendſhip: and that, if I do credit to the Church, after which I always longed, and for which I am now going to give in exchange the Bar, though not at ſo late a period of life as Young took Orders, it will be owing, in no ſmall meaſure, to my having had the happineſs of calling the author of "The Rambler" my friend.

H. C.

Oxford,
Oct. 1782.

OF Young's Poems it is difficult to give any general character; for he has no uniformity of manner: one of his pieces has no great reſemblance to another. He began to write early, and continued long; and at different times had different modes of poetical excellence in view. His numbers are ſometimes ſmooth, and ſometimes rugged; his ſtyle is ſometimes concatenated, and ſometimes abrupt; ſometimes diffuſive, and ſometimes conciſe. His plan ſeems to have ſtarted in his mind at the preſent moment; and his thoughts appear the effect of chance, ſometimes adverſe, and ſometimes lucky, with very little operation of judgement.

He was not one of thoſe writers whom experience improves, and who, obſerving their own faults, become gradually correct. His Poem on the "Laſt "Day," his firſt great performance, has an equability and propriety, which he afterwards either never endeavoured or never attained. Many paragraphs are noble, and few are mean, yet the whole is languid; the plan is too much extended, and a ſucceſſion of images divides and weakens the general conception; but the great reaſon why the reader is diſappointed is, that the thought of the LAST DAY makes every man more than poetical, by ſpreading over his mind a general obſcurity of ſacred horror, that oppreſſes diſtinction, and diſdains expreſſion.

His ſtory of "Jane Grey" was never popular. It is written with elegance enough; but Jane is too heroick to be pitied.

The

The "Universal Passion" is indeed a very great performance. It is said to be a series of Epigrams: but, if it be, it is what the author intended: his endeavour was at the production of striking distichs and pointed sentences; and his distichs have the weight of solid sentiments, and his points the sharpness of resistless truth.

His characters are often selected with discernment, and drawn with nicety; his illustrations are often happy, and his reflections often just. His species of satire is between those of Horace and Juvenal; and he has the gaiety of Horace without his laxity of numbers, and the morality of Juvenal with greater variation of images. He plays, indeed, only on the surface of life; he never penetrates the recesses of the mind, and therefore the whole power of his poetry is exhausted by a single perusal; his conceits please only when they surprise.

To translate he never condescended, unless his "Paraphrase on Job" may be considered as a version: in which he has not, I think, been unsuccessful; he indeed favoured himself, by chusing those parts which most easily admit the ornaments of English poetry.

He had least success in his lyrick attempts, in which he seems to have been under some malignant influence: he is always labouring to be great, and at last is only turgid.

In his "Night Thoughts" he has exhibited a very wide display of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and striking allusions, a wilderness of thought, in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one

of the few poems in which blank verſe could not be changed for rhyme but with diſadvantage. The wild diffuſion of the ſentiments, and the digreſſive ſallies of imagination, would have been compreſſed and reſtrained by confinement to rhyme. The excellence of this work is not exactneſs but copiouſneſs; particular lines are not to be regarded; the power is in the whole; and in the whole there is a magnificence like that aſcribed to Chineſe plantation, the magnificence of vaſt extent and endleſs diverſity.

His laſt poem was the "Reſignation;" in which he made, as he was accuſtomed, an experiment of a new mode of writing, and ſucceeded better than in his "Ocean" or his "Merchant." It was very falſely repreſented as a proof of decaying faculties. There is Young in every ſtanza, ſuch as he often was in the higheſt vigour.

His tragedies, not making part of the Collection, I had forgotten, till Mr. Steevens recalled them to my thoughts by remarking, that he ſeemed to have one favourite cataſtrophe, as his three plays all concluded with laviſh ſuicide; a method by which, as Dryden remarked, a poet eaſily rids his ſcene of perſons whom he wants not to keep alive. In "Buſiris" there are the greateſt ebullitions of imagination: but the pride of Buſiris is ſuch as no other man can have, and the whole is too remote from known life to raiſe either grief, terror, or indignation. The "Revenge" approaches much nearer to human practices and manners, and therefore keeps poſſeſſion of the ſtage: the firſt deſign ſeems ſuggeſted by "Othello;" but the reflections, the incidents, and the diction, are original. The moral obſervations are ſo introduced, and

ſo

ſo expreſſed, as to have all the novelty that can be required. Of "The Brothers" I may be allowed to ſay nothing, ſince nothing was ever ſaid of it by the publick.

It muſt be allowed of Young's poetry, that it abounds in thought, but without much accuracy or ſelection. When he lays hold of an illuſtration, he purſues it beyond expectation, ſometimes happily, as in his parallel of *Quickſilver* with *Pleaſure*, which I have heard repeated with approbation by a Lady, of whoſe praiſe he would have been juſtly proud, and which is very ingenious, very ſubtle, and almoſt exact; but ſometimes he is leſs lucky, as when, in his "Night "Thoughts," having it dropped into his mind, that the orbs, floating in ſpace, might be called the *cluſter* of creation, he thinks of a cluſter of grapes, and ſays, that they all hang on the great vine, drinking the "nectareous juice of immortal life."

His conceits are ſometimes yet leſs valuable. In the "Laſt Day" he hopes to illuſtrate the re-aſſembly of the atoms that compoſe the human body at the "Trump of Doom" by the collection of bees into a ſwarm at the tinkling of a pan.

The Prophet ſays of Tyre, that "her Merchants "are Princes." Young ſays of Tyre in his "Mer-"chant,"

> Her merchants Princes, and each *deck a Throne.*

Let burleſque try to go beyond him.

He has the trick of joining the turgid and familiar: to buy the alliance of Britain, "Climes were paid "down." Antitheſis is his favourite, "They for "kindneſs hate:" and "becauſe ſhe's right, ſhe's ever "in the wrong."

His

His verſification is his own; neither his blank nor his rhyming lines have any reſemblance to thoſe of former writers; he picks up no hemiſtichs, he copies no favourite expreſſions; he ſeems to have laid up no ſtores of thought or diction, but to owe all to the fortuitous ſuggeſtions of the preſent moment. Yet I have reaſon to believe that, when once he had formed a new deſign, he then laboured it with very patient induſtry; and that he compoſed with great labour, and frequent reviſions.

His verſes are formed by no certain model; he is no more like himſelf in his different productions than he is like others. He ſeems never to have ſtudied proſody, nor to have had any direction but from his own ear. But with all his defects, he was a man of genius and a poet.

MALLET.

OF DAVID MALLET, having no written memorial, I am able to give no other account than ſuch as is ſupplied by the unauthoriſed loquacity of common fame, and a very ſlight perſonal knowledge.

He was by his original one of the Macgregors, a clan, that became, about ſixty years ago, under the conduct of Robin Roy, ſo formidable and ſo infamous for violence and robbery, that the name was annulled by a legal abolition; and when they were all to denominate themſelves anew, the father, I ſuppoſe, of this author, called himſelf Malloch.

David Malloch was, by the penury of his parents, compelled to be *Janitor* of the High School at Edinburgh; a mean office, of which he did not afterwards delight to hear. But he ſurmounted the diſadvantages of his birth and fortune; for, when the Duke of Montroſe applied to the College of Edinburgh for a tutor to educate his ſons, Malloch was recommended;

ed; and I never heard that he diſhonoured his credentials.

When his pupils were ſent to ſee the world, they were entruſted to his care; and, having conducted them round the common circle of modiſh travels, he returned with them to London, where, by the influence of the family in which he reſided, he naturally gained admiſſion to many perſons of the higheſt rank, and the higheſt character, to wits, nobles, and ſtateſmen.

Of his works, I know not whether I can trace the ſeries. His firſt production was "William and Margaret *;" of which, though it contains nothing very ſtriking or difficult, he has been envied the reputation; and plagiariſm has been boldly charged, but never proved.

Not long afterwards he publiſhed the "Excurſion" (1728); a deſultory and capricious view of ſuch ſcenes of Nature as his fancy led him, or his knowledge enabled him, to deſcribe. It is not devoid of poetical ſpirit. Many of his images are ſtriking, and many of the paragraphs are elegant. The caſt of diction ſeems to be copied from Thomſon, whoſe "Seaſons" were then in their full bloſſom of reputation. He has Thomſon's beauties and his faults.

His poem on "Verbal Criticiſm" (1733) was written to pay court to Pope, on a ſubject which he either did not underſtand, or willingly miſrepreſented; and

* Mallet's "William and Margaret" was printed in Aaron Hill's "Plain Dealer," N° 36, July 24, 1724. In its original ſtate it was very different from what it is in the laſt edition of his works. Dr. J.

is little more than an improvement, or rather expanfion, of a fragment which Pope printed in a Miſcellany long before he engrafted it into a regular poem. There is in this piece more pertneſs than wit, and more confidence than knowledge. The verſification is tolerable, nor can criticiſm allow it a higher praiſe.

His firſt tragedy was "Eurydice," acted at Drury Lane in 1731; of which I know not the reception nor the merit, but have heard it mentioned as a mean performance. He was not then too high to accept a Prologue and Epilogue from Aaron Hill, neither of which can be much commended.

Having cleared his tongue from his native pronunciation ſo as to be no longer diſtinguiſhed as a Scot, he ſeems inclined to diſencumber himſelf from all adherences of his original, and took upon him to change his name from Scotch *Malloch* to Engliſh *Mallet*, without any imaginable reaſon of preference which the eye or ear can diſcover. What other proofs he gave of diſreſpect to his native country, I know not; but it was remarked of him, that he was the only Scot whom Scotchmen did not commend.

About this time Pope, whom he viſited familiarly, publiſhed his "Eſſay on Man," but concealed the author; and, when Mallet entered one day, Pope aſked him ſlightly what there was new. Mallet told him, that the neweſt piece was ſomething called an "Eſſay "on Man," which he had inſpected idly, and ſeeing the utter inability of the author, who had neither ſkill in writing nor knowledge of the ſubject, had toſſed

toſſed it away. Pope, to puniſh his ſelf-conceit, told him the ſecret.

A new edition of the works of Bacon being prepared (1750) for the preſs, Mallet was employed to prefix a Life, which he has written with elegance, perhaps with ſome affectation; but with ſo much more knowledge of hiſtory than of ſcience, that, when he afterwards undertook the Life of Marlborough, Warburton remarked, that he might perhaps forget that Marlborough was a general, as he had forgotten that Bacon was a philoſopher.

When the Prince of Wales was driven from the palace, and, ſetting himſelf at the head of the oppoſition, kept a ſeparate court, he endeavoured to encreaſe his popularity by the patronage of literature, and made Mallet his under-ſecretary, with a ſalary of two hundred pounds a year; Thomſon likewiſe had a penſion; and they were aſſociated in the compoſition of "The Maſque of Alfred," which in its original ſtate was played at Clieſden in 1740; it was afterwards almoſt wholly changed by Mallet, and brought upon the ſtage at Drury Lane in 1751, but with no great ſucceſs.

Mallet, in a familiar converſation with Garrick, diſcourſing of the diligence which he was then exerting upon the "Life of Marlborough," let him know, that, in the ſeries of great men quickly to be exhibited, he ſhould *find a nitch* for the hero of the Theatre. Garrick profeſſed to wonder by what artifice he could be introduced: but Mallet let him know, that, by a dexterous anticipation, he ſhould fix him in a conſpicuous place. "Mr. Mallet," ſays Garrick, in his gratitude of exultation, "have you left off to write

"for

"for the ſtage?" Mallet then confeſſed that he had a drama in his hands. Garrick promiſed to act it; and "Alfred" was produced.

The long retardation of the life of the Duke of Marlborough ſhews, with ſtrong conviction, how little confidence can be placed on poſthumous renown. When he died, it was ſoon determined that his ſtory ſhould be delivered to poſterity; and the papers ſuppoſed to contain the neceſſary information were delivered to Lord Moleſworth, who had been his favourite in Flanders. When Moleſworth died, the ſame papers were transferred with the ſame deſign to Sir Richard Steele, who in ſome of his exigences put them in pawn. They remained with the old Dutcheſs, who in her will aſſigned the taſk to Glover and Mallet, with a reward of a thouſand pounds, and a prohibition to inſert any verſes. Glover rejected, I ſuppoſe, with diſdain, the legacy, and devolved the whole work upon Mallet; who had from the late Duke of Marlborough a penſion to promote his induſtry, and who talked of the diſcoveries which he had made; but left not, when he died, any hiſtorical labours behind him.

While he was in the Prince's ſervice he publiſhed "Muſtapha," with a Prologue by Thomſon, not mean, but far inferior to that which he had received from Mallet, for "Agamemnon." The Epilogue, ſaid to be written by a friend, was compoſed in haſte by Mallet, in the place of one promiſed, which was never given. This tragedy was dedicated to the Prince his maſter. It was acted at Drury-lane in 1739, and was well received, but was never revived.

In

In 1740, he produced, as has been already mentioned, "The Masque of Alfred," in conjunction with Thomson.

For some time afterwards he lay at rest. After a long interval, his next work was "Amyntor and "Theodora" (1747), a long story in blank verse; in which it cannot be denied that there is copiousness and elegance of language, vigour of sentiment, and imagery well adapted to take possession of the fancy. But it is blank verse. This he sold to Vaillant for one hundred and twenty pounds. The first sale was not great, and it is now lost in forgetfulness.

Mallet, by address or accident, perhaps by his dependance on the prince, found his way to Bolingbroke; a man whose pride and petulance made his kindness difficult to gain, or keep, and whom Mallet was content to court by an act, which, I hope, was unwillingly performed. When it was found that Pope had clandestinely printed an unauthorised pamphlet called "The Patriot King," Bolingbroke, in a fit of useless fury, resolved to blast his memory, and employed Mallet (1749) as the executioner of his vengeance. Mallet had not virtue, or had not spirit, to refuse the office; and was rewarded, not long after, with the legacy of lord Bolingbroke's works.

Many of the political pieces had been written during the opposition to Walpole, and given to Franklin, as he supposed, in perpetuity. These, among the rest, were claimed by the will. The question was referred to arbitrators; but, when they decided against Mallet, he refused to yield to the award; and by the help of Millar the bookseller, published all that he could

 find,

find, but with succefs very much below his expectation.

In 1755, his mafque of "Britannia" was acted at Drury Lane; and his tragedy of "Elvira" in 1763; in which year he was appointed keeper of the Book of Entries for fhips in the port of London.

In the beginning of the laft war, when the nation was exafperated by ill fuccefs, he was employed to turn the publick vengeance upon Byng, and wrote a letter of accufation under the character of a "Plain "Man." The paper was with great induftry circulated and difperfed; and he, for his feafonable intervention, had a confiderable penfion beftowed upon him, which he retained to his death.

Towards the end of his life he went with his wife to France; but after a while, finding his health declining, he returned alone to England, and died in April, 1765.

He was twice married, and by his firft wife had feveral children. One daughter, who married an Italian of rank named Cilefia, wrote a tragedy called "Almida," which was acted at Drury Lane. His fecond wife was the daughter of a nobleman's fteward, who had a confiderable fortune, which fhe took care to retain in her own hands.

His ftature was diminutive, but he was regularly formed; his appearance, till he grew corpulent, was agreeable, and he fuffered it to want no recommendation that drefs could give it. His converfation was elegant and eafy. The reft of his character may, without injury to his memory, fink into filence.

As a writer, he cannot be placed in any high clafs. There is no fpecies of compofition in which he was

 eminent.

eminent. His Dramas had their day, a ſhort day, and are forgotten: his blank verſe ſeems to my ear the echo of Thomſon. His "Life of Bacon" is known as it is appended to Bacon's volumes, but is no longer mentioned. His works are ſuch as a writer, buſtling in the world, ſhewing himſelf in publick, and emerging occaſionally from time to time into notice, might keep alive by his perſonal influence; but which, conveying little information, and giving no great pleaſure, muſt ſoon give way, as the ſucceſſion of things produces new topicks of converſation and other modes of amuſement.

AKEN-

A K E N S I D E.

MARK AKENSIDE was born on the ninth of November, 1721, at Newcaſtle upon Tyne. His father Mark was a butcher, of the Preſbyterian ſect; his mother's name was Mary Lumſden. He received the firſt part of his education at the grammar-ſchool of Newcaſtle; and was afterwards inſtructed by Mr. Wilſon, who kept a private academy.

At the age of eighteen he was ſent to Edinburgh, that he might qualify himſelf for the office of a diſſenting miniſter, and received ſome aſſiſtance from the fund which the Diſſenters employ in educating young men of ſcanty fortune. But a wider view of the world opened other ſcenes, and prompted other hopes: he determined to ſtudy phyſick, and repaid that contribution, which being received for a different purpoſe, he juſtly thought it diſhonourable to retain.

Whether, when he reſolved not to be a diſſenting miniſter, he ceaſed to be a Diſſenter, I know not.

 He

He certainly retained an unneceſſary and outrageous zeal for what he called and thought liberty; a zeal which ſometimes diſguiſes from the world, and not rarely from the mind which it poſſeſſes, an envious deſire of plundering wealth or degrading greatneſs; and of which the immediate tendency is innovation and anarchy, an impetuous eagerneſs to ſubvert and confound, with very little care what ſhall be eſtabliſhed.

Akenſide was one of thoſe poets who have felt very early the motions of genius, and one of thoſe ſtudents who have very early ſtored their memories with ſentiments and images. Many of his performances were produced in his youth; and his greateſt work, "The Pleaſures of Imagination," appeared in 1744. I have heard Dodſley, by whom it was publiſhed, relate, that when the copy was offered him, the price demanded for it, which was an hundred and twenty pounds, being ſuch as he was not inclined to give precipitately, he carried the work to Pope, who, having looked into it, adviſed him not to make a niggardly offer; for "this was no every-"day writer."

In 1741 he went to Leyden, in purſuit of medical knowledge; and three years afterwards (May 16, 1744) became doctor of phyſick, having, according to the cuſtom of the Dutch Univerſities, publiſhed a theſis or diſſertation. The ſubject which he choſe was "The Original and Growth of the Human "Fœtus;" in which he is ſaid to have departed, with great judgement, from the opinion then eſtabliſhed, and to have delivered that which has been ſince confirmed and received.

Akenſide was a young man, warm with every notion that by nature or accident had been connected with the ſound of liberty, and, by an eccentricity which ſuch diſpoſitions do not eaſily avoid, a lover of contradiction, and no friend to any thing eſtabliſhed. He adopted Shafteſbury's fooliſh aſſertion of the efficacy of ridicule for the diſcovery of truth. For this he was attacked by Warburton, and defended by Dyſon: Warburton afterwards reprinted his remarks at the end of his dedication to the Freethinkers.

The reſult of all the arguments, which have been produced in a long and eager diſcuſſion of this idle queſtion, may eaſily be collected. If ridicule be applied to any poſition as the teſt of truth, it will then become a queſtion whether ſuch ridicule be juſt; and this can only be decided by the application of truth, as the teſt of ridicule. Two men, fearing, one a real and the other a fancied danger, will be for a while equally expoſed to the inevitable conſequences of cowardice, contemptuous cenſure, and ludicrous repreſentation; and the true ſtate of both caſes muſt be known, before it can be decided whoſe terror is rational, and whoſe is ridiculous; who is to be pitied, and who to be deſpiſed. Both are for a while equally expoſed to laughter, but both are not therefore equally contemptible.

In the reviſal of his poem, though he died before he had finiſhed it, he omitted the lines which had given occaſion to Warburton's objections.

He publiſhed, ſoon after his return from Leyden (1745), his firſt collection of odes; and was impelled by his rage of patriotiſm to write a very acri-

monious epiſtle to Pulteney, whom he ſtigmatizes, under the name of Curio, as the betrayer of his country.

Being now to live by his profeſſion, he firſt commenced phyſician at Northampton, where Dr. Stonehouſe then practiſed, with ſuch reputation and ſucceſs, that a ſtranger was not likely to gain ground upon him. Akenſide tried the conteſt a while; and, having deafened the place with clamours for liberty, removed to Hampſtead, where he reſided more than two years, and then fixed himſelf in London, the proper place for a man of accompliſhments like his.

At London he was known as a poet, but was ſtill to make his way as a phyſician; and would perhaps have been reduced to great exigencies, but that Mr. Dyſon, with an ardour of friendſhip that has not many examples, allowed him three hundred pounds a year. Thus ſupported, he advanced gradually in medical reputation, but never attained any great extent of practice, or eminence of popularity. A phyſician in a great city ſeems to be the mere play-thing of fortune; his degree of reputation is, for the moſt part, totally caſual: they that employ him know not his excellence; they that reject him know not his deficience. By any acute obſerver, who had looked on the tranſactions of the medical world for half a century, a very curious book might be written on the "Fortune of Phyſicians."

Akenſide appears not to have been wanting to his own ſucceſs: he placed himſelf in view by all the common methods; he became a Fellow of the Royal Society; he obtained a degree at Cambridge; and

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was admitted into the College of Phyſicians; he wrote little poetry, but publiſhed, from time to time, medical eſſays and obſervations; he became Phyſician to St. Thomas's Hoſpital; he read the Gulſtonian Lectures in Anatomy; but began to give, for the Crounian Lecture, a hiſtory of the revival of Learning, from which he ſoon deſiſted; and, in converſation, he very eagerly forced himſelf into notice by an ambitious oſtentation of elegance and literature.

His Diſcourſe on the Dyſentery (1764) was conſidered as a very conſpicuous ſpecimen of Latinity, which entitled him to the ſame height of place among the ſcholars as he poſſeſſed before among the wits; and he might perhaps have riſen to a greater elevation of character, but that his ſtudies were ended with his life, by a putrid fever, June 23, 1770, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

AKENSIDE is to be conſidered as a didactick and lyrick poet. His great work is the "Pleaſures "of Imagination;" a performance which, publiſhed as it was, at the age of twenty-three, raiſed expectations that were not amply ſatisfied. It has undoubtedly a juſt claim to very particular notice, as an example of great felicity of genius, and uncommon amplitude of acquiſitions, of a young mind ſtored with images, and much exerciſed in combining and comparing them.

With the philosophical or religious tenets of the author I have nothing to do; my business is with his poetry. The subject is well chosen, as it includes all images that can strike or please, and thus comprises every species of poetical delight. The only difficulty is in the choice of examples and illustrations; and it is not easy in such exuberance of matter to find the middle point between penury and satiety. The parts seem artificially disposed, with sufficient coherence, so as that they cannot change their places without injury to the general design.

His images are displayed with such luxuriance of expression, that they are hidden, like Butler's Moon, by a "Veil of Light;" they are forms fantastically lost under superfluity of dress *Pars minima est ipsa puella sui*. The words are multiplied till the sense is hardly perceived; attention deserts the mind, and settles in the ear. The reader wanders through the gay diffusion, sometimes amazed, and sometimes delighted, but, after many turnings in the flowery labyrinth, comes out as he went in. He remarked little, and laid hold on nothing.

To his versification justice requires that praise should not be denied. In the general fabrication of his lines he is perhaps superior to any other writer of blank verse; his flow is smooth, and his pauses are musical; but the concatenation of his verses is commonly too long continued, and the full close does not recur with sufficient frequency. The sense is carried on through a long intertexture of complicated clauses, and, as nothing is distinguished, nothing is remembered.

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The exemption which blank verſe affords from the neceſſity of cloſing the ſenſe with the couplet betrays luxuriant and active minds into ſuch ſelf-indulgence, that they pile image upon image, ornament upon ornament, and are not eaſily perſuaded to cloſe the ſenſe at all. Blank verſe will therefore, I fear, be too often found in deſcription exuberant, in argument loquacious, and in narration tireſome.

His diction is certainly poetical as it is not proſaick, and elegant as it is not vulgar. He is to be commended as having fewer artifices of diſguſt than moſt of his brethren of the blank ſong. He rarely either recalls old phraſes, or twiſts his metre into harſh inverſions. The ſenſe however of his words is ſtrained; when "he views the Ganges from Alpine "heights;" that is, from mountains like the Alps. And the pedant ſurely intrudes (but when was blank verſe without pedantry?), when he tells how "Pla- "nets *abſolve* the ſtated round of Time."

It is generally known to the readers of poetry that he intended to reviſe and augment this work, but died before he had completed his deſign. The reformed work as he left it, and the additions which he had made, are very properly retained in the late collection. He ſeems to have ſomewhat contracted his diffuſion; but I know not whether he has gained in cloſeneſs what he has loſt in ſplendor. In the additional book, the "Tale of Solon" is too long.

One gteat defect of his poem is very properly cenſured by Mr. Walker, unleſs it may be ſaid, in his defence, that what he has omitted was not properly in his plan. "His picture of man is grand "and beautiful, but unfiniſhed. The immortality "of

"of the soul, which is the natural consequence of "the appetites and powers she is invested with, is "scarcely once hinted throughout the poem. This "deficiency is amply supplied by the masterly pencil "of Dr. Young; who, like a good philosopher, has "invincibly proved the immortality of man, from "the grandeur of his conceptions, and the meanness "and misery of his state; for this reason, a few "passages are selected from the 'Night Thoughts,' "which, with those from Akenside, seem to form a "complete view of the powers, situation, and end "of man." 'Exercises for Improvement in Elocution,' p. 66.

His other poems are now to be considered; but a short consideration will dispatch them. It is not easy to guess why he addicted himself so diligently to lyrick poetry, having neither the ease and airiness of the lighter, nor the vehemence and elevation of the grander, ode. When he lays his ill-fated hand upon his harp, his former powers seem to desert him; he has no longer his luxuriance of expression, nor variety of images. His thoughts are cold, and his words inelegant. Yet such was his love of lyricks, that, having written with great vigour and poignancy his "Epistle to Curio," he transformed it afterwards into an ode disgraceful only to its author.

Of his odes nothing favourable can be said; the sentiments commonly want force, nature, or novelty; the diction is sometimes harsh and uncouth, the stanzas ill-constructed and unpleasant, and the rhymes dissonant, or unskilfully disposed, too distant from each other, or arranged with too little regard to established use, and therefore perplexing to the ear, which

which in a ſhort compoſition has not time to grow familiar with an innovation.

To examine ſuch compoſitions ſingly cannot be required; they have doubtleſs brighter and darker parts: but, when they are once found to be generally dull, all further labour may be ſpared; for to what uſe can the work be criticiſed that will not be read?

GRAY.

GRAY.

THOMAS GRAY, the ſon of Mr. Philip Gray, a ſcrivener of London, was born in Cornhill, November 26, 1716. His grammatical education he received at Eton under the care of Mr. Antrobus, his mother's brother, then aſſiſtant to Dr. George; and when he left ſchool, in 1734, entered a penſioner at Peterhouſe in Cambridge.

The tranſition from the ſchool to the college is, to moſt young ſcholars, the time from which they date their years of manhood, liberty, and happineſs; but Gray ſeems to have been very little delighted with academical gratifications; he liked at Cambridge neither the mode of life nor the faſhion of ſtudy, and lived ſullenly on to the time when his attendance on lectures was no longer required. As he intended to profeſs the Common Law, he took no degree.

When he had been at Cambridge about five years, Mr. Horace Walpole, whoſe friendſhip he had gained at Eton, invited him to travel with him as his companion. They wandered through France into Italy; and Gray's Letters contain a very pleaſing account of many parts of their journey. But unequal friend-

ſhips are eaſily diſſolved: at Florence they quarrelled, and parted; and Mr. Walpole is now content to have it told that it was by his fault. If we look, however, without prejudice on the world, we ſhall find that men, whoſe conſciouſneſs of their own merit ſets them above the compliances of ſervility, are apt enough in their aſſociation with ſuperiors to watch their own dignity with troubleſome and punctilious jealouſy, and in the fervour of independance to exact that attention which they refuſe to pay. Part they did, whatever was the quarrel; and the reſt of their travels was doubtleſs more unpleaſant to them both. Gray continued his journey in a manner ſuitable to his own little fortune, with only an occaſional ſervant.

He returned to England in September 1741, and in about two months afterwards buried his father, who had, by an injudicious waſte of money upon a new houſe, ſo much leſſened his fortune, that Gray thought himſelf too poor to ſtudy the law. He therefore retired to Cambridge, where he ſoon after became Bachelor of Civil Law, and where, without liking the place or its inhabitants, or profeſſing to like them, he paſſed, except a ſhort reſidence at London, the reſt of his life.

About this time he was deprived of Mr. Weſt, the ſon of a chancellor of Ireland, a friend on whom he appears to have ſet a high value, and who deſerved his eſteem by the powers which he ſhews in his Letters, and in the "Ode to May," which Mr. Maſon has preſerved, as well as by the ſincerity with which, when Gray ſent him part of "Agrip-"pina,"

"pina," a tragedy that he had juſt begun, he gave an opinion which probably intercepted the progreſs of the work, and which the judgement of every reader will confirm. It was certainly no loſs to the Engliſh ſtage that "Agrippina" was never finiſhed.

In this year (1742) Gray ſeems to have applied himſelf ſeriouſly to poetry; for in this year were produced the "Ode to Spring," his "Proſpect of "Eton," and his "Ode to Adverſity." He began likewiſe a Latin poem, "De principiis cogitandi."

It may be collected from the narrative of Mr. Maſon, that his firſt ambition was to have excelled in Latin poetry: perhaps it were reaſonable to wiſh that he had proſecuted his deſign; for, though there is at preſent ſome embarraſſment in his phraſe, and ſome harſhneſs in his lyrick numbers, his copiouſneſs of language is ſuch as very few poſſeſs; and his lines, even when imperfect, diſcover a writer whom practice would have made ſkilful.

He now lived on at Peterhouſe, very little ſolicitous what others did or thought, and cultivated his mind and enlarged his views without any other purpoſe than of improving and amuſing himſelf; when Mr. Maſon, being elected Fellow of Pembroke Hall, brought him a companion who was afterwards to be his editor, and whoſe fondneſs and fidelity has kindled in him a zeal of admiration, which cannot be reaſonably expected from the neutrality of a ſtranger, and the coldneſs of a critick.

In this retirement he wrote (1747) an ode on the "Death of Mr. Walpole's Cat;" and the year afterwards attempted a poem, of more importance, on "Govern-

"Government and Education," of which the fragments which remain have many excellent lines.

His next production (1750) was his far-famed "Elegy in the Church-yard," which, finding its way into a Magazine, first, I believe, made him known to the publick.

An invitation from lady Cobham about this time gave occasion to an odd composition called "A "Long Story," which adds little to Gray's character.

Several of his pieces were published (1753), with designs by Mr. Bentley; and, that they might in some form or other make a book, only one side of each leaf was printed. I believe the poems and the plates recommended each other so well, that the whole impression was soon bought. This year he lost his mother.

Some time afterwards (1756) some young men of the college, whose chambers were near his, diverted themselves with disturbing him by frequent and troublesome noises, and, as is said, by pranks yet more offensive and contemptuous. This insolence, having endured it a while, he represented to the governors of the society, among whom perhaps he had no friends; and, finding his complaint little regarded, removed himself to Pembroke Hall.

In 1757 he published "The Progress of Poetry" and "The Bard," two compositions at which the readers of poetry were at first content to gaze in mute amazement. Some that tried them confessed their inability to understand them, though Warburton said that they were understood as well as the works of Milton and Shakspeare, which it is the fashion to admire. Garrick wrote a few lines in their praise.

praiſe. Some hardy champions undertook to reſcue them from neglect; and in a ſhort time many were content to be ſhewn beauties which they could not ſee.

Gray's reputation was now ſo high, that, after the death of Cibber, he had the honour of refuſing the laurel, which was then beſtowed on Mr. Whitehead.

His curioſity, not long after, drew him away from Cambridge to a lodging near the Muſeum, where he reſided near three years, reading and tranſcribing; and, ſo far as can be diſcovered, very little affected by two odes on "Oblivion" and "Obſcurity," in which his lyrick performances were ridiculed with much contempt and much ingenuity.

When the Profeſſor of Modern Hiſtory at Cambridge died, he was, as he ſays, "cockered and "ſpirited up," till he aſked it of lord Bute, who ſent him a civil refuſal; and the place was given to Mr. Brocket, the tutor of Sir James Lowther.

His conſtitution was weak, and, believing that his health was promoted by exerciſe and change of place, he undertook (1765) a journey into Scotland, of which his account, ſo far as it extends, is very curious and elegant: for, as his comprehenſion was ample, his curioſity extended to all the works of art, all the appearances of nature, and all the monuments of paſt events. He naturally contracted a friendſhip with Dr. Beattie, whom he found a poet, a philoſopher, and a good man. The Mareſchal College at Aberdeen offered him the degree of Doctor of Laws, which, having omitted to take it Cambridge, he thought it decent to refuſe.

What he had formerly ſolicited in vain was at laſt given him without ſolicitation. The Profeſſorſhip of

of Hiſtory became again vacant, and he received (1768) an offer of it from the Duke of Grafton. He accepted, and retained it to his death; always deſigning lectures, but never reading them; uneaſy at his neglect of duty, and appeaſing his uneaſineſs with deſigns of reformation, and with a reſolution which he believed himſelf to have made of reſigning the office, if he found himſelf unable to diſcharge it.

Ill health made another journey neceſſary, and he viſited (1769) Weſtmorland and Cumberland. He that reads his epiſtolary narration wiſhes, that to travel, and to tell his travels, had been more of his employment; but it is by ſtudying at home that we muſt obtain the ability of travelling with intelligence and improvement.

His travels and his ſtudies were now near their end. The gout, of which he had ſuſtained many weak attacks, fell upon his ſtomach, and, yielding to no medicines, produced ſtrong convulſions, which (July 30, 1771,) terminated in death.

His character I am willing to adopt, as Mr. Maſon has done, from a Letter written to my friend Mr. Boſwell, by the Rev. Mr. Temple, rector of St. Gluvias in Cornwall; and am as willing as his warmeſt well-wiſher to believe it true.

" Perhaps he was the moſt learned man in Eu-" rope. He was equally acquainted with the ele-" gant and profound parts of ſcience, and that not " ſuperficially, but thoroughly. He knew every branch " of hiſtory, both natural and civil; had read all the " original hiſtorians of England, France, and Italy; " and was a great antiquarian. Criticiſm, metaphyſicks, " morals, politicks, made a principal part of his ſtudy;

"voyages and travels of all ſorts were his favourite "amuſements; and he had a fine taſte in painting, "prints, architecture, and gardening. With ſuch a "fund of knowledge, his converſation muſt have "been equally inſtructing and entertaining; but he "was alſo a good man, a man of virtue and huma- "nity. There is no character without ſome ſpeck, "ſome imperfection; and I think the greateſt defect "in his was an affectation in delicacy, or rather effe- "minacy, and a viſible faſtidiouſneſs, or contempt "and diſdain of his inferiours in ſcience. He alſo had, "in ſome degree, that weakneſs which diſguſted Vol- "taire ſo much in Mr. Congreve: though he ſeemed "to value others chiefly according to the progreſs "they had made in knowledge, yet he could not bear "to be conſidered merely as a man of letters; and, "though without birth, or fortune, or ſtation, his deſire "was to be looked upon as a private independent gen- "tleman, who read for his amuſement. Perhaps it may "be ſaid, What ſignifies ſo much knowledge, when it "produced ſo little? Is it worth taking ſo much pains "to leave no memorial but a few poems? But let it "be conſidered that Mr. Gray was to others at leaſt "innocently employed; to himſelf certainly benefi- "cially. His time paſſed agreeably: he was every "day making ſome new acquiſition in ſcience; his "mind was enlarged, his heart ſoftened, his virtue "ſtrengthened; the world and mankind were ſhewn "to him without a maſk; and he was taught to con- "ſider every thing as trifling, and unworthy of the "attention of a wiſe man, except the purſuit of "knowledge and practice of virtue, in that ſtate "wherein God hath placed us."

To

To this character Mr. Mason has added a more particular account of Gray's skill in zoology. He has remarked, that Gray's effeminacy was affected most "before those whom he did not wish to "please;" and that he is unjustly charged with making knowledge his sole reason of preference, as he paid his esteem to none whom he did not likewise believe to be good.

What has occurred to me from the slight inspection of his Letters in which my undertaking has engaged me is, that his mind had a large grasp; that his curiosity was unlimited, and his judgement cultivated; that he was a man likely to love much where he loved at all; but that he was fastidious and hard to please. His contempt, however, is often employed, where I hope it will be approved, upon scepticism and infidelity. His short account of Shaftesbury I will insert.

"You say you cannot conceive how Lord Shaftes-"bury came to be a philosopher in vogue; I will "tell you: first, he was a lord; secondly, he was "as vain as any of his readers; thirdly, men are "very prone to believe what they do not understand; "fourthly, they will believe any thing at all, pro-"vided they are under no obligation to believe it; "fifthly, they love to take a new road, even when "that road leads no where; sixthly, he was reckoned "a fine writer, and seems always to mean more than "he said. Would you have any more reasons? An "interval of above forty years has pretty well de-"stroyed the charm. A dead lord ranks with com-"moners; vanity is no longer interested in the mat-"ter: for a new road has become an old one."

 Mr.

Mr. Mafon has added, from his own knowledge, that, though Gray was poor, he was not eager of money; and that, out of the little that he had, he was very willing to help the neceffitous.

As a writer he had this peculiarity, that he did not write his pieces firft rudely, and then correct them, but laboured every line as it arofe in the train of compofition; and he had a notion not very peculiar, that he could not write but at certain times, or at happy moments; a fantaftick foppery, to which my kindnefs for a man of learning and virtue wifhes him to have been fuperior.

GRAY's Poetry is now to be confidered; and I hope not to be looked on as an enemy to his name, if I confefs that I contemplate it with lefs pleafure than his life.

His ode "On Spring" has fomething poetical, both in the language and the thought; but the language is too luxuriant, and the thoughts have nothing new. There has of late arifen a practice of giving to adjectives derived from fubftantives the termination of participles; fuch as the *cultured* plain, the *daified* bank; but I was forry to fee, in the lines of a fcholar like Gray, the *honied* Spring. The morality is natural, but too ftale; the conclufion is pretty.

The poem "On the Cat" was doubtlefs by its author confidered as a trifle, but it is not a happy trifle. In the firft ftanza, "the azure flowers *that* "blow" fhew refolutely a rhyme is fometimes made when it cannot eafily be found. Selima, the Cat, is called a nymph, with fome violence both to language and

and ſenſe; but there is no good uſe made of it when it is done; for of the two lines,

What female heart can gold deſpiſe?
What cat 's averſe to fiſh?

the firſt relates merely to the nymph, and the ſecond only to the cat. The ſixth ſtanza contains a melancholy truth, that "a favourite has no friend;" but the laſt ends in a pointed ſentence of no relation to the purpoſe; if *what gliſtered* had been *gold*, the cat would not have gone into the water; and, if ſhe had, would not leſs have been drowned.

The "Proſpect of Eton College" ſuggeſts nothing to Gray which every beholder does not equally think and feel. His ſupplication to father Thames, to tell him who drives the hoop or toſſes the ball, is uſeleſs and puerile. Father Thames has no better means of knowing than himſelf. His epithet "buxom health" is not elegant; he ſeems not to underſtand the word. Gray thought his language more poetical as it was more remote from common uſe: finding in Dryden "honey redolent of Spring," an expreſſion that reaches the utmoſt limits of our language, Gray drove it a little more beyond common apprehenſion, by making "gales" to be "redolent of joy and youth."

Of the "Ode on Adverſity," the hint was at firſt taken from "O Diva, gratum quæ regis Antium;" but Gray has excelled his original by the variety of his ſentiments, and by their moral application. Of this piece, at once poetical and rational, I will not by ſlight objections violate the dignity.

My proceſs has now brought me to the *wonderful* "Wonder of Wonders," the two Siſter Odes; by

which, though either vulgar ignorance or common ſenſe at firſt univerſally rejected them, many have been ſince perſuaded to think themſelves delighted. I am one of thoſe that are willing to be pleaſed, and therefore would gladly find the meaning of the firſt ſtanza of the "Progreſs of Poetry."

Gray ſeems in his rapture to confound the images of "ſpreading ſound and running water." A "ſtream "of muſick," may be allowed; but where does "muſick" however "ſmooth and ſtrong," after having viſited the "verdant vales, rowl down the "ſteep amain," ſo as that "rocks and nodding groves "rebellow to the roar?" If this be ſaid of Muſick, it is nonſenſe; if it be ſaid of Water, it is nothing to the purpoſe.

The ſecond ſtanza, exhibiting Mars's car and Jove's eagle, is unworthy of further notice. Criticiſm diſdains to chaſe a ſchool-boy to his commonplaces.

To the third it may likewiſe be objected, that it is drawn from mythology, though ſuch as may be more eaſily aſſimilated to real life. Idalia's "velvet green" has ſomething of cant. An epithet or metaphor drawn from Nature ennobles Art; an epithet or metaphor drawn from Art degrades Nature. Gray is too fond of words arbitrarily compounded. "Many-twink-"ling" was formerly cenſured as not analogical; we may ſay "many-ſpotted," but ſcarcely "many-ſpot-"ting." This ſtanza, however, has ſomething pleaſing.

Of the ſecond ternary of ſtanzas, the firſt endeavours to tell ſomething, and would have told it, had it not been croſſed by Hyperion: the ſecond de-

ſcribes well enough the univerſal prevalence of Poetry; but I am afraid that the concluſion will not riſe from the premiſes. The caverns of the North and the plains of Chili are not the reſidences of "Glory "and generous Shame." But that Poetry and Virtue go always together is an opinion ſo pleaſing, that I can forgive him who reſolves to think it true.

The third ſtanza ſounds big with "Delphi," and "Egean," and "Iliſſus," and "Meander," and "hal-"lowed fountains," and "ſolemn ſound;" but in all Gray's odes there is a kind of cumbrous ſplendour which we wiſh away. His poſition is at laſt falſe: in the time of Dante and Petrarch, from whom we derive our firſt ſchool of Poetry, Italy was over-run by "ty-"rant power" and "coward vice;" nor was our ſtate much better when we firſt borrowed the Italian arts.

Of the third ternary, the firſt gives a mythological birth of Shakſpeare. What is ſaid of that mighty genius is true; but it is not ſaid happily: the real effects of this poetical power are put out of ſight by the pomp of machinery. Where truth is ſufficient to fill the mind, fiction is worſe than uſeleſs; the counterfeit debaſes the genuine.

His account of Milton's blindneſs, if we ſuppoſe it cauſed by ſtudy in the formation of his poem, a ſuppoſition ſurely allowable, is poetically true, and happily imagined. But the *car* of Dryden, with his *two courſers*, has nothing in it peculiar; it is a car in which any other rider may be placed.

"The Bard" appears, at the firſt view, to be, as Algarotti and others have remarked, an imitation of the phophecy of Nereus. Algarotti thinks it ſuperior

to its original; and, if preference depends only on the imagery and animation of the two poems, his judgement is right. There is in "The Bard" more force, more thought, and more variety. But to copy is less than to invent, and the copy has been unhappily produced at a wrong time. The fiction of Horace was to the Romans credible; but its revival disgusts us with apparent and unconquerable falsehood. *Incredulus odi.*

To select a singular event, and swell it to a giant's bulk by fabulous appendages of spectres and predictions, has little difficulty; for he that forsakes the probable may always find the marvellous. And it has little use; we are affected only as we believe; we are improved only as we find something to be imitated or declined. I do not see that "The Bard" promotes any truth, moral or political.

His stanzas are too long, especially his epodes; the ode is finished before the ear has learned its measures, and consequently before it can receive pleasure from their consonance and recurrence.

Of the first stanza the abrupt beginning has been celebrated; but technical beauties can give praise only to the inventor. It is in the power of any man to rush abruptly upon his subject, that has read the ballad of *Johnny Armstrong*,

Is there ever a man in all Scotland—

The initial resemblances, or alliterations, "ruin, ruthless, helm or hauberk," are below the grandeur of a poem that endeavours at sublimity.

In

In the ſecond ſtanza the Bard is well deſcribed; but in the third we have the puerilities of obſolete mythology. When we are told that "Cadwallo "huſh'd the ſtormy main," and that "Modred "made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topp'd "head," attention recoils from the repetition of a tale that, even when it was firſt heard, was heard with ſcorn.

The *weaving* of the *winding-ſheet* he borrowed, as he owns, from the northern Bards; but their texture, however, was very properly the work of female powers, as the act of ſpinning the thread of life is another mythology. Theft is always dangerous; Gray has made weavers of ſlaughtered bards by a fiction outrageous and incongruous. They are then called upon to "Weave the warp, and weave the "woof," perhaps with no great propriety; for it is by croſſing the *woof* with the *warp* that men weave the *web* or piece; and the firſt line was dearly bought by the admiſſion of its wretched correſpondent, "Give ample room and verge enough *." He has, however, no other line as bad.

The third ſtanza of the ſecond ternary is commended, I think, beyond its merit. The perſonification is indiſtinct. *Thirſt* and *Hunger* are not alike; and their features, to make the imagery perfect, ſhould have been diſcriminated. We are told, in the

* "I have a ſoul, that like an *ample* ſhield
"Can take in all; and *verge enough* for more."
Dryden's Sebaſtian.

ſame

fame ftanza, how " towers are fed." But I will no longer look for particular faults; yet let it be obferved that the ode might have been concluded with an action of better example; but fuicide is always to be had, without expence of thought.

Thefe odes are marked by glittering accumulations of ungraceful ornaments; they ftrike, rather than pleafe; the images are magnified by affectation; the language is laboured into harfhnefs. The mind of the writer feems to work with unnatural violence. " Double, double, toil and trouble." He has a kind of ftrutting dignity, and is tall by walking on tiptoe. His art and his ftruggle are too vifible, and there is too little appearance of eafe and nature.

To fay that he has no beauties, would be unjuft: a man like him, of great learning and great induftry, could not but produce fomething valuable. When he pleafes leaft, it can only be faid that a good defign was ill directed.

His tranflations of Northern and Welfh Poetry deferve praife; the imagery is preferved, perhaps often improved; but the language is unlike the language of other poets.

In the character of his Elegy I rejoice to concur with the common reader; for by the common fenfe of readers, uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinements of fubtilty and the dogmatifm of learning, muft be finally decided all claim to poetical honours. The " Church-yard" abounds with images which find a mirrour in every mind, and with fentiments to which every bofom returns an echo. The

four

four ſtanzas, beginning "Yet even theſe bones," are to me original: I have never ſeen the notions in any other place; yet he that reads them here perſuades himſelf that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and uſeleſs to praiſe him.

LYTTELTON.

GEORGE LYTTELTON, the ſon of Sir Thomas Lyttelton, of Hagley in Worceſterſhire, was born in 1709. He was educated at Eton; where he was ſo much diſtinguiſhed, that his exerciſes were recommended as models to his ſchoolfellows.

From Eton he went to Chriſt-church, where he retained the ſame reputation of ſuperiority, and diſplayed his abilities to the publick in a poem on "Blenheim."

He was a very early writer, both in verſe and proſe. His "Progreſs of Love," and his "Perſian Letters," were both written when he was very young; and indeed the character of a young man is very viſible in both. The verſes cant of ſhepherds and flocks, and crooks dreſſed with flowers; and the Letters have ſomething of that indiſtinct and headſtrong ardour for liberty which a man of genius always catches when he enters the world, and always ſuffers to cool as he paſſes forward.

He ſtaid not long in Oxford; for in 1728 he began his travels, and ſaw France and Italy. When he returned, he obtained a ſeat in Parliament, and ſoon diſtinguiſhed himſelf among the moſt eager opponents of Sir Robert Walpole, though his father, who was Commiſſioner of the Admiralty, always voted with the Court.

For many years the name of George Lyttelton was ſeen in every account of every debate in the Houſe of Commons. He oppoſed the ſtanding army; he oppoſed the exciſe; he ſupported the motion for petioning the King to remove Walpole. His zeal was conſidered by the courtiers not only as violent, but as acrimonious and malignant; and, when Walpole was at laſt hunted from his places, every effort was made by his friends, and many friends he had, to exclude Lyttelton from the Secret Committee.

The Prince of Wales, being (1737) driven from St. James's, kept a ſeparate court, and opened his arms to the opponents of the miniſtry. Mr. Lyttelton became his ſecretary, and was ſuppoſed to have great influence in the direction of his conduct. He perſuaded his maſter, whoſe buſineſs it was now to be popular, that he would advance his character by patronage. Mallet was made under-ſecretary, with 200 *l.*; and Thomſon had a penſion of 100 *l.* a year. For Thomſon Lyttelton always retained his kindneſs, and was able at laſt to place him at eaſe.

Moore courted his favour by an apologetical poem, called the "Trial of Selim;" for which he was paid with kind words, which, as is common, raiſed great hopes, that were at laſt diſappointed.

Lyttelton now ſtood in the firſt rank of oppoſition; and Pope, who was incited, it is not eaſy to ſay how, to increaſe the clamour againſt the miniſtry, commended him among the other patriots. This drew upon him the reproaches of Fox, who, in the houſe, imputed to him as a crime his intimacy with a lampooner ſo unjuſt and licentious. Lyttelton ſupported his friend; and replied, that he thought it an honour to be received into the familiarity of ſo great a poet.

While he was thus conſpicuous, he married (1741) Miſs Lucy Forteſcue of Devonſhire, by whom he had a ſon, the late Lord Lyttelton, and two daughters, and with whom he appears to have lived in the higheſt degree of connubial felicity: but human pleaſures are ſhort; ſhe died in childbed about five years afterwards; and he ſolaced his grief by writing a long poem to her memory.

He did not, however, condemn himſelf to perpetual ſolitude and ſorrow; for, after a while, he was content to ſeek happineſs again by a ſecond marriage with the daughter of Sir Robert Rich; but the experiment was unſucceſsful.

At length, after a long ſtruggle, Walpole gave way, and honour and profit were diſtributed among his conquerors. Lyttelton was made (1744) one of the Lords of the Treaſury; and from that time was engaged in ſupporting the ſchemes of the miniſtry.

Politicks did not, however, ſo much engage him as to with-hold his thoughts from things of more importance. He had, in the pride of juvenile confidence, with the help of corrupt converſation, entertained

tained doubts of the truth of Chriſtianity; but he thought the time now come when it was no longer fit to doubt or believe by chance, and applied himſelf ſeriouſly to the great queſtion. His ſtudies, being honeſt, ended in conviction. He found that religion was true, and what he had learned he endeavoured to teach (1747) by "Obſervations on the "Converſion of St. Paul;" a treatiſe to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a ſpecious anſwer. This book his father had the happineſs of ſeeing, and expreſſed his pleaſure in a letter which deſerves to be inſerted.

"I have read your religious treatiſe with infinite "pleaſure and ſatisfaction. The ſtyle is fine and "clear, the arguments cloſe, cogent, and irreſiſtible. "May the King of Kings, whoſe glorious cauſe you "have ſo well defended, reward your pious labours, "and grant that I may be found worthy, through "the merits of Jeſus Chriſt, to be an eye-witneſs of "that happineſs which I don't doubt he will bountifully beſtow upon you. In the mean time, I "ſhall never ceaſe glorifying God, for having endowed you with ſuch uſeful talents, and giving "me ſo good a ſon.

"Your affectionate father,

THOMAS LYTTELTON."

A few years afterwards (1751), by the death of his father, he inherited a baronet's title with a large eſtate, which, though perhaps he did not augment, he was careful to adorn by a houſe of great elegance and

and expence, and by much attention to the decoration of his park.

As he continued his activity in parliament, he was gradually advancing his claim to profit and preferment; and accordingly was made in time (1754) cofferer and privy counsellor: this place he exchanged next year for the great office of chancellor of the Exchequer; an office, however, that required some qualifications which he soon perceived himself to want.

The year after, his curiosity led him into Wales; of which he has given an account, perhaps rather with too much affectation of delight, to Archibald Bower, a man of whom he has conceived an opinion more favourable than he seems to have deserved, and whom, having once espoused his interest and fame, he was never persuaded to disown. Bower, whatever was his moral character, did not want abilities; attacked as he was by an universal outcry, and that outcry, as it seems, the echo of truth, he kept his ground; at last, when his defences began to fail him, he sallied out upon his adversaries, and his adversaries retreated.

About this time Lyttelton published his "Dialogues of the Dead," which were very eagerly read, though the production rather, as it seems, of leisure than of study: rather effusions than compositions. The names of his persons too often enable the reader to anticipate their conversation; and, when they have met, they too often part without any conclusion. He has copied Fenelon more than Fontenelle.

When they were first published, they were kindly commended by the "Critical Reviewers;" and poor Lyttelton,

Lyttelton, with humble gratitude, returned, in a note which I have read, acknowledgements which can never be proper, ſince they muſt be paid either for flattery or for juſtice.

When, in the latter part of the laſt reign, the inauſpicious commencement of the war made the diſſolution of the miniſtry unavoidable, Sir George Lyttelton, loſing with the reſt his employment, was recompenſed with a peerage; and reſted from political turbulence in the Houſe of Lords.

His laſt literary production was his "Hiſtory of "Henry the Second," elaborated by the ſearches and deliberations of twenty years, and publiſhed with ſuch anxiety as only vanity can dictate.

The ſtory of this publication is remarkable. The whole work was printed twice over, a great part of it three times, and many ſheets four or five times. The bookſellers paid for the firſt impreſſion; but the charges and repeated operations of the preſs were at the expence of the author, whoſe ambitious accuracy is known to have coſt him at leaſt a thouſand pounds. He began to print in 1755. Three volumes appeared in 1764, a ſecond edition of them in 1767, a third edition in 1768, and the concluſion in 1771.

Andrew Reid, a man not without conſiderable abilities, and not unacquainted with letters or with life, undertook to perſuade Lyttelton, as he had perſuaded himſelf, that he was maſter of the ſecret of punctuation; and, as fear begets credulity, he was employed, I know not at what price, to point the pages of "Henry the Second." The book was at laſt pointed and printed, and ſent into the world. Lyttelton took money for his copy, of which when he had paid the

 Pointer,

Pointer, he probably gave the reſt away; for he was very liberal to the indigent.

When time brought the Hiſtory to a third edition, Reid was either dead or diſcarded; and the ſuperintendence of typography and punctuation was committed to a man originally a comb-maker, but then known by the ſtyle of Doctor. Something uncommon was probably expected, and ſomething uncommon was at laſt done; for to the Doctor's edition is appended, what the world had hardly ſeen before, a liſt of errors in nineteen pages.

But to politicks and literature there muſt be an end. Lord Lyttelton had never the appearance of a ſtrong or of a healthy man; he had a ſlender, uncompacted frame, and a meagre face; he laſted however ſixty years, and was then ſeized with his laſt illneſs. Of his death a very affecting and inſtructive account has been given by his phyſician, which will ſpare me the taſk of his moral character.

"On Sunday evening the ſymptoms of his lordſhip's diſorder, which for a week paſt had alarmed us, put on a fatal appearance, and his lordſhip believed himſelf to be a dying man. From this time he ſuffered by reſtleſſneſs rather than pain; though his nerves were apparently much fluttered, his mental faculties never ſeemed ſtronger, when he was thoroughly awake.

"His lordſhip's bilious and hepatic complaints ſeemed alone not equal to the expected mournful event; his long want of ſleep, whether the conſequence of the irritation in the bowels, or, which is more probable, of cauſes of a different kind, accounts for his loſs of ſtrength, and for his death, very ſufficiently.

"Though

"Though his lordſhip wiſhed his approaching
" diſſolution not to be lingering, he waited for it
" with reſignation. He ſaid, 'It is a folly, a keep-
" ing me in miſery, now to attempt to prolong life;'
" yet he was eaſily perſuaded, for the ſatisfaction of
" others, to do or take any thing thought proper for
" him. On Saturday he had been remarkably better,
" and we were not without ſome hopes of his re-
" covery.

"On Sunday, about eleven in the forenoon, his
" lordſhip ſent for me, and ſaid he felt a great hurry,
" and wiſhed to have a little converſation with me,
" in order to divert it. He then proceeded to open
" the fountain of that heart, from whence goodneſs
" had ſo long flowed, as from a copious ſpring.
" 'Doctor,' ſaid he, 'you ſhall be my confeſſor:
" when I firſt ſet out in the world, I had friends who
" endeavoured to ſhake my belief in the Chriſtian
" religion. I ſaw difficulties which ſtaggered me;
" but I kept my mind open to conviction. The
" evidences and doctrines of Chriſtianity, ſtudied
" with attention, made me a moſt firm and perſuaded
" believer of the Chriſtian religion. I have made it
" the rule of my life, and it is the ground of my
" future hopes. I have erred and ſinned; but have
" repented, and never indulged any vicious habit.
" In politicks, and publick life, I have made publick
" good the rule of my conduct. I never gave coun-
" ſels which I did not at the time think the beſt. I
" have ſeen that I was ſometimes in the wrong; but
" I did not err deſignedly. I have endeavoured, in
" private life, to do all the good in my power, and

"never for a moment could indulge malicious or un-"just designs upon any person whatsoever.'

"At another time he said, 'I must leave my soul "in the same state it was in before this illness; I find "this a very inconvenient time for solicitude about "any thing.'

"On the evening, when the symptoms of death "came on, he said, 'I shall die; but it will not be "your fault.' When lord and lady Valentia came "to see his lordship, he gave them his solemn bene-"diction, and said, 'Be good, be virtuous, my lord; "you must come to this.' Thus he continued "giving his dying benediction to all around him. "On Monday morning a lucid interval gave some "small hopes, but these vanished in the evening; "and he continued dying, but with very little un-"easiness, till Tuesday morning, August 22, when "between seven and eight o'clock, he expired, al-"most without a groan."

His lordship was buried at Hagley; and the following inscription is cut on the side of his lady's monument:

"This unadorned stone was placed here
by the particular desire and express
directions of the Right Honourable
GEORGE Lord LYTTELTON,
who died August 22, 1773, aged 64."

Lord

Lord Lyttelton's Poems are the works of a man of literature and judgement, devoting part of his time to verſification. They have nothing to be deſpiſed, and little to be admired. Of his "Progreſs of Love," it is ſufficient blame to ſay that it is paſtoral. His blank verſe in "Blenheim" has neither much force nor much elegance. His little performances, whether Songs or Epigrams, are ſometimes ſprightly, and ſometimes inſipid. His epiſtolary pieces have a ſmooth equability, which cannot much tire, becauſe they are ſhort, but which ſeldom elevates or ſurprizes. But from this cenſure ought to be excepted his "Advice "to Belinda," which, though for the moſt part written when he was very young, contains much truth and much prudence, very elegantly and vigorouſly expreſſed, and ſhews a mind attentive to life, and a power of poetry which cultivation might have raiſed to excellence.

END OF THE ELEVENTH VOLUME.